

Saturday February 10 1996

Abu Dhabi D 8.50	Algeria L 2.00	Andorra FF 19	Austria AS 26	Bahrain B 0.80	Belgium BF 60	Bulgaria L 1.70	Canada CA 12.50	Cyprus C 1.00	Czech Republic KC 45	Denmark DK 15	Dubai D 0.50	Egypt E 1.50	Estonia L 1.30	Finland FM 11	France FF 10	Germany DM 3.50	Greece G 350	Hong Kong HK 25	Hungary H 100	Iceland IS 185	India IN 50	Iran IR 100	Italy I 1,000	Japan Y 100	Korea K 100	Latvia LV 2	Lithuania LT 2000	Luxembourg L 55	Malaysia M 200	Malta ML 0.45	Mexico MX 15	Netherlands G 4.00	Norway NK 15	Oman OR 1.00	Pakistan R 70	Poland Z 0.70	Portugal E 200	Romania R 100	Russia R 100	Saudi Arabia R 10	Slovakia SK 15	Slovenia SL 250	Spain P 225	Sweden S 15	Switzerland SF 3	Taiwan T 100	Tanzania TD 1.50	Turkey TL 100,000	Ukraine UA 100	USA US 2.75	Zimbabwe Z 27.00
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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46,472

Outlook

Lord Justice Scott exclusive interview



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Finance

Made in Israel Know-how powers economic revival

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Money

When the kissing stops... the hidden cost of love

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Bomb injures more than 100 Major attacks 'appalling outrage'

Blast ends ceasefire

Adams blames British leaders

Duncan Campbell, Patrick Wintour, John Mullin, David Sharrock, David Pallister and Helen Nowicka

THE 17-month IRA ceasefire came to a bloody end at 7pm last night with a blast that rocked east London, injured more than 100 people and thrust Northern Ireland back into political ferment.

After one hour of shock and hectic checking with the security forces, Prime Minister John Major attacked the bombing as "an appalling outrage". He called upon Sinn Fein and the IRA to condemn unequivocally those who planted the bomb near South Quay railway station on the Isle of Dogs, and any suggestion that the ceasefire is over.

The Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams, appeared to accept that the IRA ceasefire had ended when he said that he regretted that "an unprecedented opportunity for peace has floundered on the refusal of the British government and Unionist leaders to enter into dialogue and substantive negotiations."

Mr Adams appealed for calm, and also hinted at a split by saying Sinn Fein's peace strategy remains the main function of the party and his personal priority.

An hour-and-a-half after the blast, there was a report of a second device and fire officers were withdrawn.

Five people were seriously injured in the blast — two with "major" and three with "serious" injuries — and there were reported to be 100 "walking wounded", including a five-year-old girl with facial injuries. Two of the most seriously injured are police officers. The bomb had been planted in an underground garage in a six-storey office block.

No one within Sinn Fein immediately supported the bombing, but the warning message to Dublin news paper came with an authentic IRA code. Earlier in the day, Mr Adams had taken calls from the public on BBC Radio in Belfast. His message was that political talks were the way ahead.

David Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionists, said: "If there has been a resumption of violence then it has clearly been done in order to try and prevent elections in Northern Ireland. It is incredible that people who, for the last 18 months, have been telling us they want to move into the democratic process should be resorting to violence."

Joe Hendron, the SDLP's MP for Belfast West, told Sky News: "I know that Gerry Adams on local radio was saying that the ceasefire was total and permanent. I suspect that this is perhaps a breakthrough from the IRA."

Dr Hendron accused the British government of "playing with fire" over the Mitchell Report on decommissioning terrorist weapons, but said the people of Northern Ireland would be numbed by the reported end of the ceasefire.

Ken Maginnis, the Ulster Unionist spokesman on secu-



Fire services arrive at the scene of the explosion

ry, told Channel 4 News: "I suppose I spent 18 months hoping against hope that I was wrong when I predicted this ceasefire was nothing but an attempt by the IRA and Sinn Fein to open a window of opportunity for those who have the support of just 4.8 per cent of the entire Northern Ireland electorate. Sadly, the hopes and the hopes of thousands have been dashed by what has happened."

The first hint that the ceasefire was about to end came when Scotland Yard received warnings from news agencies and Sky Television at 5.41pm that a coded statement had been received.

Scotland Yard said that they had been informed of the threat by a number of news agencies in Ireland and on the mainland, and attempts had been made to evacuate the area. Twenty fire engines and 80 firefighters were despatched to the scene.

The message warned that the IRA had "with great reluctance" decided that the "complete cessation of violence" would end at 8pm last night. Other news agencies in Ireland and London received warnings that a bomb had been planted at South Quay railway station.

Within an hour, the threat had been realised. Moments after 7pm a blast that could be heard throughout east and north-east London announced that the IRA was back.

In his statement, Mr Major said: "This is an appalling outrage. My first thoughts are with the casualties, their fam-

ilies and the emergency services. We will pursue relentlessly those responsible for this disgraceful attack.

"It would be a tragedy if the hopes of the people of Britain and Northern Ireland for lasting peace were dashed again by the men of violence. This atrocity confirms again the urgent need to remove illegal arms from the equation."

Mr Major was joined by the Labour leader, Tony Blair, who condemned the bombing as a sickening outrage, while the Liberal Democrat leader, Paddy Ashdown, said it means the IRA has moved against the popular will of the Irish people, North and South.

The Irish prime minister, John Bruton, condemned the bombing as "entirely unjustified."

There were reports that windows in buildings as far as seven miles away had been shaken by the explosion.

Many of the injured were taken to the Royal London Hospital about three miles from Canary Wharf. But Jacqueline Cardiff, the hospital's general manager, said heavy traffic was delaying treatment. "We were told to expect 100 walking wounded and six serious cases," she said. One man was in theatre with serious head and chest injury, and most of the other patients suffered cuts and bruises.

Linda Holmes, co-owner of the Tradewinds wine bar about 200 yards from the explosion, said: "The blast was like being on a rollercoaster. All the windows came in and our customers all bent

over to shield themselves from the flying glass. We can't understand why the police didn't tell us before hand so we could vacate the building."

Last night a substantial area of Docklands was cordoned off amid reports of a large gas leak in the area.

Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionists, said: "I regret that the British government did not realise that terrorists are terrorists, and until they bring forth fruits for repentance they cannot be trusted. Unfortunately the British government trusted them and those of us who said, 'Be cautious, take care, watch, be wary, don't lower your guard' were labelled as anti-peace men."

The Ulster Unionist Roy Beggs, MP for Antrim East, said that even if the statement and the bomb were the work of a splinter group, that was not important.

"It's of no significance whether it is the action of a splinter group or otherwise. It's a very serious situation that has now been created."



Major's statement

JOHN MAJOR last night condemned the Canary Wharf bomb. In a statement, he said: "This is an appalling outrage. My first thoughts are with the casualties, their families and the emergency services. We will pursue relentlessly those responsible for this disgraceful attack."

"Sinn Fein had given assurances time and time again that they were committed to peaceful progress. I now call on the leadership of Sinn Fein and the IRA to condemn immediately and unequivocally those who planted this bomb. It would be a tragedy if the hopes of the people of Brit-



'IRA statement'

THE full text of the statement supposedly from the IRA and telephoned to RTE in Dublin last night read:

"It is with great reluctance that the leadership announces that the complete cessation of military operations will end at 8pm on February 9.

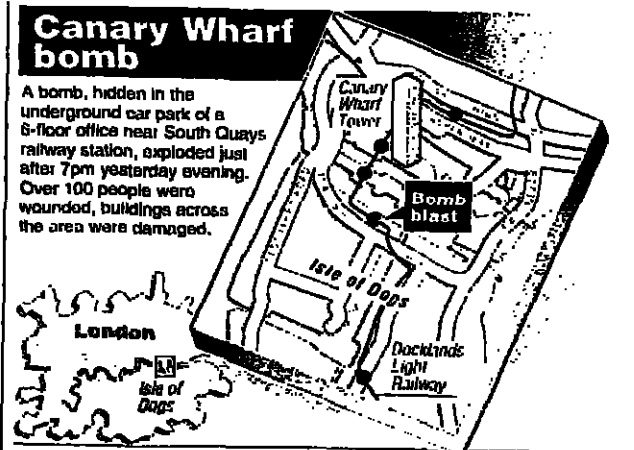
"As we stated on August 31, 1994, the basis for cessation was to enhance the democratic peace process and to underline our definitive commitment to its success. We also made it clear that we believed an opportunity to create a just and lasting settlement had been created.

"The cessation presented an historic challenge for everyone, and the IRA commended the leaderships of nationalist Ireland at home and abroad. They rose to the challenge. The British prime minister did not.

"Instead of embracing the peace process, the Brit-

Canary Wharf bomb

A bomb, hidden in the underground car park of a 6-floor office near South Quay railway station, exploded just after 7pm yesterday evening. Over 100 people were wounded, buildings across the area were damaged.



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No move to open prison for Hindley

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

MYRA HINDLEY, the moors murderer, accepts that she will not be moved to an open prison because of the practical difficulties involved, despite a recommendation backing the idea from the Parole Board.

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, is expected to reject the Parole Board's advice to move Hindley, aged 54, from Durham high security prison when he makes his final decision early next month.

The Parole Board is chaired by Lord Belstead, a former Conservative leader of the House of Lords, and is made up of judges, psychiatrists, probation officers, and other members. Its official guidelines stress it must place the emphasis on "the risk aspect" in any decision to move a prisoner to low-security conditions.

Mr Howard will make his detailed explanation of the Hindley files later this month when he also decides whether to confirm Lord Waddington's 1990 ruling that she should spend the rest of her life in jail.

Friends of Myra Hindley made clear yesterday that while she would prefer a different prison regime to that in force in the special high security wing at Durham, she recognises that it is impractical for her to be moved to a low security jail — in part because of the problem of press intrusion.

The three open women's prisons — East Sutton Park in Kent, Ashkam Grange near York, and Drake's Hall, Staffordshire — allow their inmates to move around freely without being guarded. Sometimes they are allowed outside the prison grounds. Prisoners in open jails are judged not to be an escape risk or a threat to the public.

The Parole Board was asked by the Home Secretary to consider whether Hindley, and other life sentence murderers who have served more than 20 years, should be transferred to open prisons. It was part of a package of changes which included telling the prisoners whether or not they would ever be released, following a House of Lords judgment. It is not known if the Parole Board has advised Mr Howard to transfer any other mandatory life prisoners.

The board's decision to recommend that Hindley should be moved was greeted by those who have campaigned for her release as the first official recognition of the "evil creature" she was 30 years ago.

In December Hindley wrote a 5,000-word article in the *Manchester Evening News* in which she admitted she was more culpable than Ian Brady for the child killings but claiming she was no longer the "evil creature" she was 30 years ago.

Tory MPs saw the decision as an indictment of "liberal attitudes" within the Parole Board. John Carlisle, MP for Luton North, called it "an appalling decision and typical of the Parole Board".

Mr Howard confirmed yesterday that it was his intention to transfer Myra Hindley to an open prison but that he had as yet made no decision. He could fully understand the reaction of the families of the children murdered by Hindley, but had to look at the case "as I would any individual prisoner".

Manchester's rain falls mainly somewhere else

Martyn Halsall
and Tom Sharvatt

"In Manchester continuously rainy weather prevails for most of the time, and when it will not stop raining in London they call it 'Manchester weather'." — Philip Nennich, a visitor from Hamburg in 1799

MANCHESTER, the "rainy city", was yesterday re-christened the driest city in Western Europe as a deluge of statistics announced its driest period in living memory. A soggy Malta, at the summit of a Sun-drenched Madrid, Rome, Athens — and even a drought-stricken Majorca — have all had better reasons to raise umbrellas than Manchester in the last 10 months.

A soggy Malta, at the summit of a Sun-drenched Madrid, Rome, Athens — and even a drought-stricken Majorca — have all had better reasons to raise umbrellas than Manchester in the last 10 months. A soggy Malta, at the summit of a Sun-drenched Madrid, Rome, Athens — and even a drought-stricken Majorca — have all had better reasons to raise umbrellas than Manchester in the last 10 months.

The city can normally expect about 700mm (27in) over this period, but since the drought began Mancunians have had to run for shelter from a mere 360mm (14in). "This is the severest drought in living memory," Harry Croft, operations director of North West Water, announced yesterday, during an unaccustomed shower.

"There is now little chance of reservoirs filling up before the summer." The city has been enduring its driest period for 70 years, Manchester because of a rare claim meteorologists. It is 60 years since 10 such consecutive dry months threatened Manchester's streaming reputation, and brought standpipes to the streets.

Officially Manchester is third in the national rainfall league tables, after Cardiff and Belfast, said the Met Office. The drought had taken an unaccustomed hold on Manchester because of a rare run of south-east winds, rather than the customary westerlies.

Joe Buchdahl, a climate expert based at Manchester's Metropolitan University, said that the city's weather station, at the airport, was effectively sheltered in a rain shadow area, protected from any potential drenchings by the Welsh mountains, the Pennines and the Peak District.

However, he was not prepared to put global warming in the dock. "Any scientist will tell you that you can't go on one year's data," he said. But as a first thaw of deep snow on the Pennines and the odd shower yesterday offered some respite, North West Water announced a raft of extended emergency measures and another £1.5 million of expenditure to counter waste from leaks.

Meanwhile, Anthony Goldstone, chairman of the customer services committee of North West Water, criticised the utility for failing to forecast the depth of the drought. He claimed it had been "liv-



Outside Manchester Town Hall billboards proclaim the new status of a city haunted in the past by a reputation for rainfall

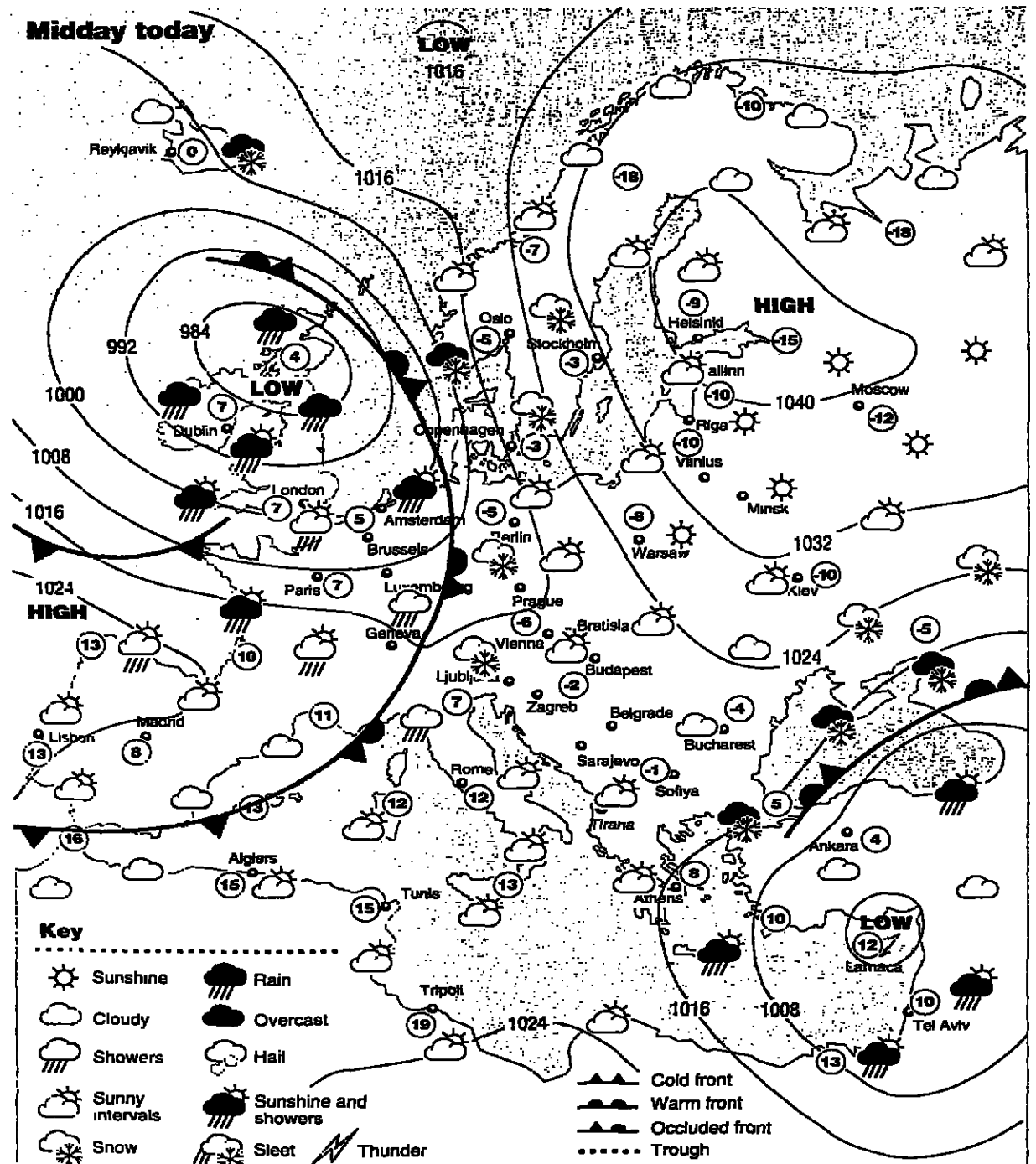
PHOTOGRAPH DENIS THORPE

ing on a wing and a prayer, hoping things would get better. Forecasters were hopeful for showers and longer periods of rain across the North-west this weekend, which would begin transforming the Pennine reservoirs. These are now only 20 per cent full, compared with 96 per cent a year ago.

But while some earlier visitors found it hard to discern the weather at all through the smoke that made Manchester "the entrance to Hell realised", at least historians could point to an amused Queen Victoria, when she became the first English monarch to brave the place in 1851.

"The day was fine and mild... the sun shining brightly," she noted.

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities

City	Today	Tomorrow
Algeria	17-11	18-10
Amsterdam	10-4	11-5
Berlin	10-4	11-5
Bombay	28-22	29-23
Buenos Aires	18-12	19-13
Calcutta	30-24	31-25
Cardiff	10-4	11-5
London	10-4	11-5
Madras	30-24	31-25
Manila	28-22	29-23
Paris	10-4	11-5
Rome	18-12	19-13
Stockholm	10-4	11-5
Tel Aviv	18-12	19-13
Yokohama	18-12	19-13

Around the world

City	Today	Tomorrow
Algeria	17-11	18-10
Amsterdam	10-4	11-5
Berlin	10-4	11-5
Bombay	28-22	29-23
Buenos Aires	18-12	19-13
Calcutta	30-24	31-25
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London	10-4	11-5
Madras	30-24	31-25
Manila	28-22	29-23
Paris	10-4	11-5
Rome	18-12	19-13
Stockholm	10-4	11-5
Tel Aviv	18-12	19-13
Yokohama	18-12	19-13

European weather outlook

Western Norway and Denmark will be mainly cloudy, cold and windy with outbreaks of snow from time to time. Elsewhere it should be mainly fine and bright with only a few scattered light snow showers. Max temp mostly -2 to -10C but lower in the north-east.

Television and radio — Saturday

BBC 1
8.30am News, 9.00am News, 9.30am News, 10.00am News, 10.30am News, 11.00am News, 11.30am News, 12.00pm News, 1.00pm News, 1.30pm News, 2.00pm News, 2.30pm News, 3.00pm News, 3.30pm News, 4.00pm News, 4.30pm News, 5.00pm News, 5.30pm News, 6.00pm News, 6.30pm News, 7.00pm News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm News, 9.00pm News, 9.30pm News, 10.00pm News, 10.30pm News, 11.00pm News, 11.30pm News, 12.00am News.

Television and radio — Sunday

BBC 1
8.30am News, 9.00am News, 9.30am News, 10.00am News, 10.30am News, 11.00am News, 11.30am News, 12.00pm News, 1.00pm News, 1.30pm News, 2.00pm News, 2.30pm News, 3.00pm News, 3.30pm News, 4.00pm News, 4.30pm News, 5.00pm News, 5.30pm News, 6.00pm News, 6.30pm News, 7.00pm News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm News, 9.00pm News, 9.30pm News, 10.00pm News, 10.30pm News, 11.00pm News, 11.30pm News, 12.00am News.

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A Chinese policeman checks destroyed pirate CDs and videos

PHOTOGRAPH: GREG BAKER



Golden oldies... The US and European Commission are coming to the defence of established favourites not protected by Japanese copyright regulations, such as (clockwise from top) the Beatles, Frank Sinatra, Simon and Garfunkel and the Rolling Stones

West tries to silence Japan's 'bootleg' tunes

Tokyo is being threatened with tough action over copyright and its rules on royalties

Stephen Bates in Brussels and Kevin Rafferty in Tokyo

JAPANESE copyright-busting versions of 1960s hits by artists such as the Beatles, Rolling Stones and Frank Sinatra were yesterday being targeted by the European Commission and the United States for breaching world trade agreements.

Besides bootleg recordings, Commission officials have drawn attention to Japanese regulations on royalties, which now exclude some of the most popular Western hits throughout the country.

Both the Commission and Washington have threatened to take Japan to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) unless its government revises newly-introduced copyright legislation to extend protection for performers and their companies to 50 years.

Current Japanese regulations protect foreign artists only back to 1971 — which leaves most jazz, pop and rock and roll greats vulnerable to copying that would be illegal outside the country.

The US estimated yesterday that lost revenue might amount to \$500 million (£315 million) a year, with compact disc versions of hits by the Beatles and other groups selling for a third of their price in Europe or America.

Some of the quaintly-spelled versions on sale in Tokyo include: "Best, The Beatles" — selling for the equivalent of about £3 — and a cassette tape featuring the greatest hits of a pair called

Simon and Garfunkel (sic) called "The Sound of Silence". Sixties versions of classical recordings by Western orchestras are also being remastered on CDs and sold as "live classics".

A European Commission spokesman in Brussels said: "We have decided to come to the rescue of the golden oldies. If Japan does not change its legislation within two weeks we will request formal consultations, with a challenge to the World Trade Organisation within 60 days."

The US has already filed a complaint to the WTO. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) specifically co-ordinates copyright agreements to 50 years.

Mickey Kantor, the US trade representative, said it was the first time he could remember coming to the defence of Frank Sinatra or Bo Diddley, two of the most popular artists in Japan. The intellectual property

rights of composers and lyricists are protected for 50 years after their deaths, but the rights of musicians and record companies were agreed internationally under a 1993 accord which came into effect this year and was supposed to offer retrospective protection.

The EC and the US claim the Japanese have an obligation to extend their protection to 50 years, but Tokyo claims its copyright protection regulations have been cleared by the World Intellectual Property Organisation of the United Nations. A foreign ministry spokesman yesterday denied any intention to extend protection from 25 to 50 years.

Mr Kantor said in Washington that the US administration had made 13 separate approaches to the Japanese authorities, without success. It is believed 6 million unauthorised discs are produced annually in Japan.

The Japanese recording industry is thought to be worth \$8 billion a year. China smashed thousands of counterfeit compact discs yesterday to try to convince the US it had kept promises to end piracy.

The display of China's "winter offensive" on piracy and pornography — a timed media tour of efforts to confiscate and destroy counterfeit computer software — was conducted hours before the expected arrival of a senior US trade official.

US officials have acknowledged that China had stepped up efforts to curb rampant piracy since an agreement in February 1995 averted tit-for-tat trade sanctions. But they say progress has been limited largely to the retail level and that production and export of pirated goods had caused losses even higher than the \$66 million losses estimated when the agreement was reached last year. — Reuter.

Lone Irish gunboat keeps pirate trawler kings at bay

AN IRISH gunboat is keeping the "pirates" at bay in Europe's richest fishing grounds. The Eithne, flagship of the republic's overstretched naval service, bucks and crashes through high seas off the coast of Cork, tracking what its commander says are the West's last great hunters, for whom European fishing quotas are merely the latest threat to their way of life.

The Irish Naval Service admits it is under strain. It badly needs a new vessel for guarding its fishing waters, and as an incentive to European purse-string holders it has suggested that it could be built at the Harland and Wolff shipyard in staunchly loyalist east Belfast.

The republic has only seven vessels with which to patrol the Irish Box, a 200-mile zone around Ireland with rich fishing areas that the Spanish — Europe's trawler kings — are hungry to exploit.

Since January 1, under European Union regulations, 40 Spanish vessels are allowed to fish inside the box at any one time.

This has prompted anger from Irish fishermen, who accuse the Spanish of cheating and of endangering future stocks by catching undersize hake, a speciality back on the Iberian peninsula. Senior officers in the naval service deny there is conclusive evidence that since the new arrangements came into effect the Spanish have been plundering the fishing grounds, but privately admit they need at least one new patrol vessel to enforce the agreement.

They are hopeful that European Union funding of up to 75 per cent of the construction of a ship — with an estimated price tag of £25 million — will be agreed sometime in March, and have already visited shipyards in Germany and Southampton. The Eithne, built at Cork 13 years ago, but a shipbuilding capacity no longer exists there.

As an extra incentive to the project they believe that if the contract were awarded to Harland and Wolff it would serve as a powerful step to cementing the ceasefires and building

reconciliation between the two parts of the divided island.

Since the lifting of restrictions the naval service has concentrated on the most popular area of the box, to the south and west of Ireland, according to its flag officer commanding, Commodore John Kavanagh. "We've found no illegal activity, in spite of what some media reports have claimed."

"The expected invasion by a Spanish Armada didn't take place."

That may be because the Spanish are waiting to see how well the new rules are enforced.

Last year nearly two thirds of fishing vessels arrested at sea, brought into harbour by the naval service and subsequently prosecuted, were Spanish-owned. With the aid of two recently purchased Casa maritime patrol aircraft — bought from Spain — every vessel plying vast areas of sea can be logged, photographed and verified via a computer link at the fleet's Haulbowline base, though the Irish authorities admit

that these state-of-the-art facilities cannot prevent fishing vessels from netting illegally.

"Most times boats are entitled to be where they are fishing, so it does require boardings to discover technical infringements," said Commodore Kavanagh. "Despite what is said about the Spanish we have never discovered large quantities of undersize fish on a trawler."

He believes the Spanish receive so much criticism simply because their fleet is so large. Fourteen Irish vessels were also detained last year.

"Fishermen are the last great hunter-gatherers in western Europe," said another officer on the Eithne. "They don't like being tied down by bureaucratic regulations. The Spanish have been fishing these waters since the 18th century."

"It was much worse in the 1980s when Ireland joined the EEC. It wasn't uncommon for rifles to be brought out. Nowadays they're more prepared to let us on board and face the consequences of prosecution if they've violated the law."

Guppy seeks damages from Mirror

Clare Dyer

DARIUS Guppy, the society fraudster freed from Ford Open Prison this week after a friend lent him £160,000 to secure his early release, yesterday issued a High Court writ against the Mirror Group.

The 30-year-old Old Etonian, who was best man at the wedding of the Princess of Wales's brother, Earl Spencer, is suing the group for alleged breach of contract after the Daily Mirror allegedly pulled out of a £75,000 deal to buy his story. David

Montgomery, chief executive of Mirror Group, is understood to have vetoed the deal after it emerged that Mr Guppy was advanced the money by a "mystery friend" against assurances that he could repay the loan from the proceeds of selling his life story.

The money went to Lloyds, which he and an accomplice swindled in a £1.8 million gems insurance fraud, landing him with a five-year jail sentence in February 1993.

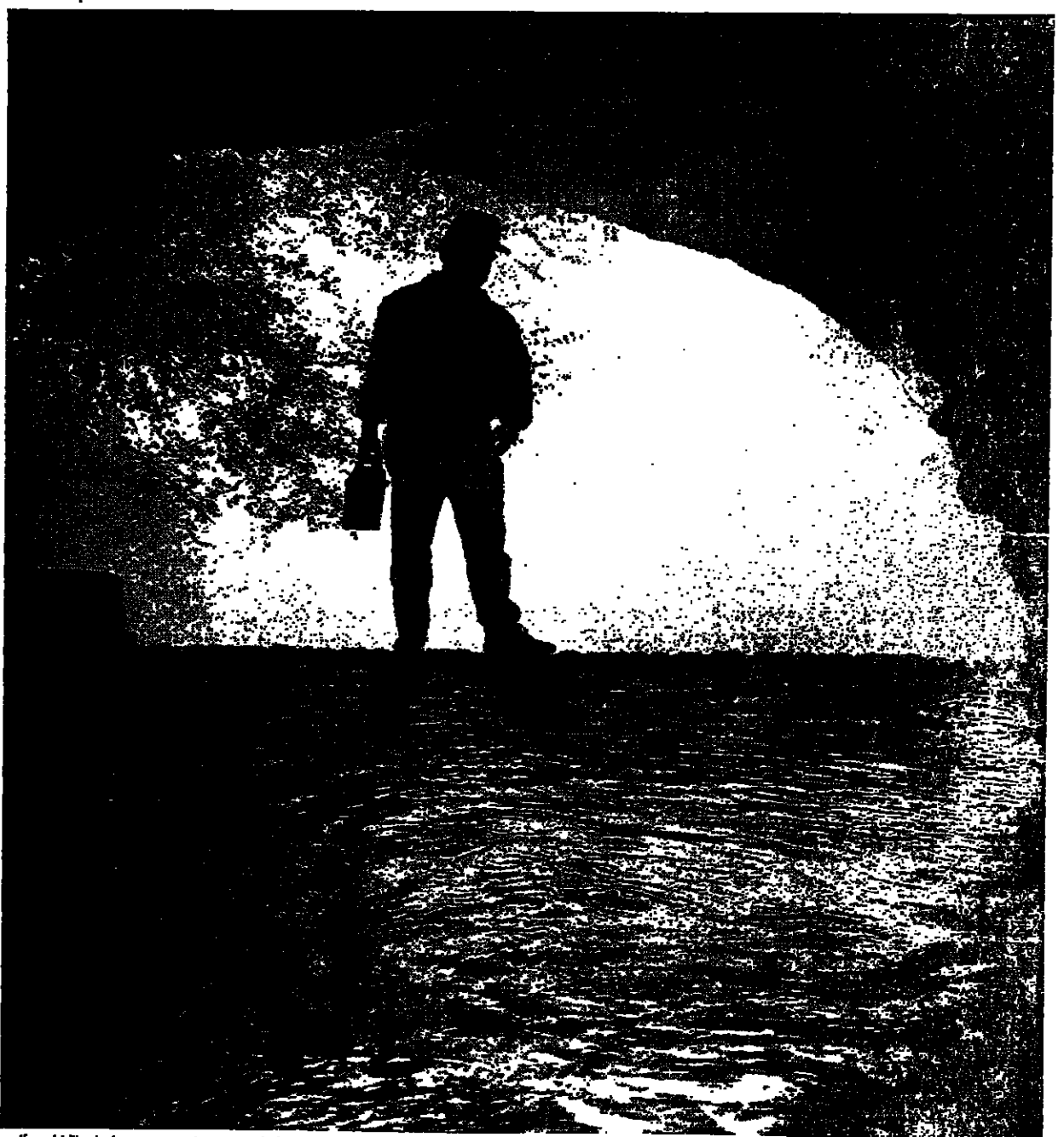
Last July he was sentenced to a further three years after claiming he was unable to repay £227,000 to Lloyds.

Although money was taken off the bill for every day he spent in jail, he said through lawyers last December that he would be unable to pay because he had been declared bankrupt. Piers Morgan, Daily Mirror editor, said last night: "The Daily Mirror has an absolute policy of not paying money to convicted criminals or their lawyers. We will be defending the writ vigorously."

The writ says that last Monday, Mr Morgan, and company solicitor Martin Crudace told Mr Guppy that the newspaper would not publish the story because Mr Mont-

gomery "considered £75,000 to be an excessive fee." It adds that Mr Guppy had an agreement that for £75,000 he granted exclusive rights to publish the "full account" of his relationship with his wife and others, details of "certain criminal offences", and his time in jail.

The Press Complaints Commission's code of practice lays down that papers should not make payments to people engaged in crime or their associates, unless publication is in the public interest. Since Mr Guppy is bankrupt, it was thought that any payment would have gone to a creditor.



If you'd like to know more about our oldtime whiskey-making ways, write to us at the Jack Daniel Distillery, Lynchburg, Tennessee USA.

WHEN JACK DANIEL first gazed upon the pure spring water in this limestone cave, he knew he was on to something.

So he built a distillery around it. Because Mr. Jack realized right away the water he'd discovered was perfect for making his Tennessee Whiskey. For one thing, it's 100% iron-free (iron is ruinous to good whiskey). This precious natural resource, along with our charcoal mellowing method, has accounted for Jack Daniel's uncommon rareness since 1866. And, we believe, for its uncommon number of customers and friends.



JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Firth places great store on the contrasting powers of light and dark. He believes he is perceived as a simpler fellow on this set because he is blond and his Darcy in Pride and Prejudice owed much of its mystery to black hair dye.

Linda Blandford interviews Colin Firth

Outlook page 17



A model wearing an £875 Cara bridal gown from the Berkertex Brides collection at the National Wedding Show at Olympia, London, which ends tomorrow. The show is intended to help couples to arrange everything from stag and hen nights to honeymoon locations. PHOTOGRAPH: TRICIA LING

Labour rounds on off-the-cuff remark by Major PM says rail fraud just 'misbehaviour'

Keith Harper and Rebecca Smithers

AN OFF-THE-CUFF remark by John Major that the alleged ticket fraud on the London, Tilbury and Southend railway line was an example of "misbehaviour" sparked an attack by Labour last night.

Senior shadow cabinet ministers attacked the Prime Minister for failing to condemn criminal behaviour, and said the entire rail sell-off was "a shambles". Mr Major's unscripted remarks came during a visit to a school near his Huntingdon constituency, when he also insisted that the privatisation timetable had not been thrown into chaos.

Responding to news that the London, Tilbury and Southend (LTS) franchise would have to be let to another company because of the alleged fraud, Mr Major said: "Someone misbehaved. That happens. It happens in the public sector, it happens in the private sector."

Labour's deputy leader, John Prescott, speaking at the party's local government conference in Birmingham, said: "This isn't misbehaviour. These are serious allegations of fraud involving thousands of pounds. This is a prime minister who is weak on crime and weak on the causes of crime. And the cause of the Government's own privatisation policy — putting private greed before public need."

The shadow Home Secretary, Jack Straw, wrote to Mr Major, saying that he was "astonished" by his choice of language. "Regardless of any political embarrassment you may feel at the consequences of this fraud, is it not important for someone in your position to give a moral lead and condemn what has patently been wrongdoing?"

Alleged ticket irregularities on the line were uncovered during an internal audit by British Rail last week. Up to £45,000 in ticket money, which should have ended up with London Transport, allegedly found its way to LTS.

Mr Major went on to insist that his government would press ahead with its rail privatisation programme, but admitted that the need to seek a new company to take over the LTS franchise was "irresistible". The process could take several months instead of the one month the Government had hoped to achieve.

Some MPs noted that Mr Major had gone much further in his observation on the matter than the Transport Secretary Sir George Young, who refused to be drawn on the role of individual employees, pending the outcome of the investigations.

"It [privatisation] is not off the tracks," Mr Major commented. "It has not thrown the timetable into chaos. It is a process that we will have to reframe the LTS line, but that's all."

Warning of more revelations to come, Brian Wilson, Labour's transport spokesman said: "This is the worst setback yet to privatisation. Mr Major should be aware that this is just the start of many more humiliations."

News in brief

Gulf veterans accuse lawyers

GULF War veterans last night accused "squabbling solicitors" of delaying their fight to prove that the Ministry of Defence should compensate them for illnesses suffered after the 1991 war. One firm of solicitors has gone to the High Court to insist that a second firm should not have been awarded exclusive rights to legal aid funds worth millions of pounds.

About 720 Gulf War veterans are taking the ministry to court to prove they were negligently treated after the war. Ian Hill, chairman of the National Gulf War Veterans and Families Association, said: "The only people hurting because of this are the veterans. The Ministry of Defence must be having a good laugh at this when our solicitors can't even agree among themselves."

The High Court decision yesterday means the research money will not go to Dawbarns of King's Lynn and Geoffrey Stephen and Co, Plymouth. Their tender was successfully challenged by Donn and Co of Manchester, which has about 700 Gulf War clients on its books compared with about 20 with their rivals. The Legal Aid Board has been told to start the process again. — Maggie O'Kane

Boy dies in crash

A BOY aged four died when the car in which he was being driven to school collided with an ambulance in Dunstable, Bedfordshire, yesterday. Police said his mother and baby brother were injured. A spokeswoman for Aston St Peter's school, where the dead child was a pupil, said last night his name was William Mills.

The crash, which also involved three other vehicles, happened near the school gates. The spokeswoman said the children at the school had been told what happened and had received counselling throughout the day.

Eavesdropper to apologise

THE man who eavesdropped on a mobile phone call by the Duke of Edinburgh said yesterday he had been seduced by the prospect of money, and would write to him to apologise. Neville Hawkins, who lives at Ingoldisthorpe, Norfolk, admitted he had given in to temptation after coming across the duke's conversation while using a radio scanner at his home.

"I was seduced by money, I suppose," said Mr Hawkins in an interview with BBC Radio Norfolk. "I suppose I saw the Duke as someone you just see on TV. But I guess I realised he is a person with feelings the same as anyone else, and what I had done was wrong."

Bomb plot sentence upheld

AN IRISH university lecturer will have to continue his 95-year jail sentence for plotting a mainland bombing campaign, the Court of Appeal decided yesterday. Feilim Padraic O'Hadhmaill, aged 37, was convicted at the Old Bailey on November 8, 1994, of conspiring between January 1, 1993 and February 22, 1994 to cause an explosion.

His appeal against conviction was dismissed on February 1. A decision on his appeal against sentence was delayed until yesterday. O'Hadhmaill was a sociology lecturer at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston.

The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor, sitting with Mr Justice Latham and Mr Justice Hooper, said: "We do not consider that this sentence was manifestly excessive, and the application for leave to appeal against it is refused."

Father jailed

THE father of a six-week-old baby boy who admitted putting an unlit cigarette in its mouth was jailed yesterday for 28 days. The man, who cannot be named for legal reasons, pleaded guilty to willfully ill-treating the child between September 10 and October 12 last year.

Maidstone magistrates were told that he threw the baby into the air, held him upside down, and placed a cigarette in his mouth. Diane Ginever, defending, said the man and his 19-year-old partner had been "unprepared for the relentless demands of being parents." There was no physical injury to the baby and, I suspect, no psychological damage either. He was remanded in custody pending an appeal against sentence.

Holiday for Gromit

THE animator Nick Park, who created Wallace and Gromit, is to make a full-length animated film, it was announced yesterday. Park, who scooped four awards for A Close Shave at Thursday's British Animation Awards, said the project would take two years. It will not feature Wallace and Gromit.

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السلامة للجميع

Nazi-hunter becomes the quarry

Simon Wiesenthal's 50-year record comes under serious scrutiny as a pack of critics dismiss him as a tragic bungler in a prime-time documentary on German television. Ian Traynor in Bonn reports



Top of wanted list... Adolf Eichmann, Martin Bormann and Josef Mengele, left to right

SIMON Wiesenthal was being treated in a Viennese hospital yesterday at the age of 87 as controversy raged over his record and celebrated Nazi-hunting sleuth. It followed the screening of a prime-time German television documentary which featured interviews with leading Nazi-hunters from the United States, France, and Israel's Mossad intelligence service, all of whom were scathing of Mr Wiesenthal's 50-year career in tracking down war criminals. Mr Wiesenthal's lawyers were understood to be considering legal action against the makers of the 20-minute Panorama documentary broadcast by the Hamburg-based North German Broadcasting television network on Thursday night. "Incompetent", "unprofessional", and "tragic figure" were some of the milder terms used to describe Mr Wiesenthal. He was accused of inflating his own role in the Mossad capture of Adolf Eichmann, one of Hitler's key henchmen, in Argentina, of providing wrong and useless information in the hunt for Martin Bormann, and the Nazi doctor, Josef Mengele, who performed gruesome medical experiments on concentration camp inmates. Eichmann was tried in Israel and executed in 1961. Bormann is now known to have died in Berlin in 1945, and Mengele died in Brazil in 1979. The programme also revisited the bitter row surround-

ing the former Austrian president, Kurt Waldheim, cleared of war crimes in the 1980s but found to have covered up his wartime past as a German intelligence officer in the Balkans. The sensitivity of the subject and its prime-time screening in Germany led to intervention by the office of the chancellor, Helmut Kohl, after Mr Wiesenthal apparently contacted Mr Kohl to express concern about the programme. A Kohl aide telephoned the programme-makers twice to inquire about their sources of information. "The position of the editorial staff here is that there was no pressure from the German government to prevent the show being run."

Investigations (OSI), whose 1983 book, *Betrayal*, is an indictment of Mr Waldheim and Mr Wiesenthal's role in the Austrian scandal. Mr Wiesenthal told an acquaintance 10 days ago that he refused to take part in the programme because he knew it was to serve up his critics en masse. The producers said they tried countless times to get him to appear. In his absence, the film was spliced with recurring footage of the elderly Nazi-hunter stating "There can be no compromise with the truth", before cutting to another interviewee alleging that Mr Wiesenthal had for decades been more than economical with the truth. The centre of his one-man

truth about something, I did this show to prevent it being used by neo-Nazis." He quoted Elan Steinberg of the World Jewish Congress — a friend of Mr Wiesenthal's — as telling him: "If you set yourself up as a moral arbiter, you have to be judged by that standard." Mr Lingens allowed that "vanity and self-deception" on Mr Wiesenthal's part may have led him to exaggerate his claims or inflate his own importance, but he described the documentary as "one-sided and manipulative", a vehicle for the World Jewish Congress's long campaign to discredit Mr Wiesenthal. Neal Sher, who led the OSI investigation into Mr Waldheim, resulting in the former Austrian president being barred from entering the US and then being more or less quarantined internationally, told the programme that Mr Wiesenthal had repeatedly urged him "not to take action against Waldheim, and suggesting to do so would hurt my office".

'Neo-Nazis are never helped by telling the truth. I did this programme to prevent it being used by neo-Nazis'

said John Goetz, one of the programme's co-producers. Character assassination or exposure? All of the interviewees are known to have waged long-running feuds and vendettas against Mr Wiesenthal. They included Beate Klarsfeld, the French Nazi-hunter, Isser Harel, the retired Mossad chief who headed the Eichmann capture operation and has been hopping mad for decades over Mr Wiesenthal's perceived effort to take the credit for the spectacular kidnapping, and Eli Rosenbaum, the head of the US justice department's Office of Special

operation, a dingy cramped office in central Vienna, was inundated with faxes from anonymous neo-Nazis yesterday. Mr Wiesenthal's secretary said. Peter-Michael Lingens, deputy editor of the Viennese newspaper, *Der Standard*, who did research for Mr Wiesenthal more than 30 years ago and remains close contact with him, said he expected Austria's populist far-right leader, Jörg Haider, to exploit the programme's message. But Mr Goetz, the co-producer, said: "Neo-Nazis are never helped by telling the

truth about something, I did this show to prevent it being used by neo-Nazis." He quoted Elan Steinberg of the World Jewish Congress — a friend of Mr Wiesenthal's — as telling him: "If you set yourself up as a moral arbiter, you have to be judged by that standard." Mr Lingens allowed that "vanity and self-deception" on Mr Wiesenthal's part may have led him to exaggerate his claims or inflate his own importance, but he described the documentary as "one-sided and manipulative", a vehicle for the World Jewish Congress's long campaign to discredit Mr Wiesenthal. Neal Sher, who led the OSI investigation into Mr Waldheim, resulting in the former Austrian president being barred from entering the US and then being more or less quarantined internationally, told the programme that Mr Wiesenthal had repeatedly urged him "not to take action against Waldheim, and suggesting to do so would hurt my office".



One-man operation... Simon Wiesenthal, from his cramped Vienna office, invariably failed to furnish concrete evidence against alleged war criminals, US investigators claim

Crusade of one who survived 'mountain of death' camp

Hella Plick

SIMON Wiesenthal is the most famous survivor of Majdanek, the concentration camp known as the "mountain of death", liberated by General Patton's forces on the eve of VE Day near Hitler's birthplace of Linz. Mr Wiesenthal had been in forced-labour and concentration camps since 1941. He was brought to Mauthausen in February 1945. The gas chamber was working at full capacity. Those inmates still alive were starving. When the Americans arrived on May 7, 1945, the skeletal Mr Wiesenthal, whose weight had fallen to 99lb, was lying on his bunk in a hut littered with corpses that had not been removed. Stumbling into the yard, he saw a big grey tank with the American flag waving from the turret. Next morning, he told an American doctor he wanted to be taken to the US command. He was carried to the office of Colonel Richard Seibel, the leader of the US forces in the camp. There Mr Wiesenthal learned the Americans were already interrogating suspected war criminals. Finding a vacant chair in the interrogation room, Mr Wiesenthal slumped down. "There were two uniformed Americans and one in civilian dress, and they brought in a number of chained SS men and questioned them. This was the US war crimes unit at work. What I was witnessing was the stuff of dreams, something that I would never have thought, during all the years in the camps, could happen in real life. "Every day I went to watch the interrogations, and every day I asked them to let me work for the war crimes unit." After some days, the Americans agreed. It was the beginning of a Nazi-hunting mission that was to become a lifetime crusade.

Germany honours US 'hero of art'

Terrence Petty in Bonn

AN AMERICAN second world war veteran, who received a medal from the German government yesterday for resisting a 1945 US army order, said before it was hung round his neck: "No one should ever take cultural property." Walter Farmer, aged 84, fought the Germans and then became director of a US military "collecting point" in Wiesbaden where art treasures were being temporarily stored. He is credited by Germany with being instrumental in keeping the occupying US army from taking paintings by Rembrandt, Dürer, Botticelli and other masters as war booty. Mr Farmer said he could take only partial credit. A total of 35 American soldiers, all part of a US military "Monuments" unit whose job was to safeguard art treas-

ures hidden by the Nazis after the war, protested against the army's orders to send the paintings to the US. Mr Farmer said all of his group had put their careers on the line. But when it came to art, "I wouldn't fear the devil himself," he said. Klaus Kinkel, the German foreign minister, draped the ribboned Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit around his neck at the government's opulent guest house on a mountain overlooking the Rhine. German museum authorities, politicians and an official from the US embassy attended the ceremony. Germany hopes Russia will take note and relinquish a hoard of cultural treasures confiscated by the Red Army during and after the war. "We are here today to pay tribute to the courageous and honorable captain who in the winter of 1945, following the darkest period in Germany's history, stood up for our heri-

tage," Mr Kinkel said. He compared Mr Farmer to an 18th-century Prussian officer, Friedrich von Marwitz, who was dismissed by Frederick the Great for refusing to loot a castle. Standing up to a superior's orders in the name of art takes guts, Mr Kinkel told Mr Farmer. Mr Farmer's engineering unit landed in Normandy in 1944. He later transferred to the Monuments unit and was made director of the Wiesbaden collecting point in 1945. He ordered US army tanks placed around the building, surrounded it with an electric fence and posted GIs and German police officers as guards. "Our greatest fear was being looted," he said. On November 6 1945, he was ordered to prepare 200 paintings for shipment to the US for a supposedly limited but undetermined stay. Mr Farmer feared the paintings would never be given

back to the Berlin museum that owned them because some US officials had been talking about keeping German-owned art as war reparations. "I burst into tears. But I realised tears would accomplish nothing," he said. He telephoned Monuments officers in Paris, Berlin and elsewhere in Europe. They rushed to Wiesbaden and the following day drew up a document protesting against the order. Other Monuments officers sent letters supporting the "Wiesbaden Manifesto." The paintings were sent anyway. But the manifesto created a huge stir and the art was returned to Germany within four years. After the ceremony, Mr Farmer was asked if he felt Germany was using him to win back art treasures held in Russia. He said no. But he had some advice for the Russians. "They should feel the same way I felt" about stolen art, and return it — AP.

Spain hits back over Belgian court ruling

STEPHEN BATES in Brussels

THE diplomatic row between Spain and Belgium over a Brussels court's decision to free two suspected Basque terrorists instead of extraditing them escalated last night as Spain announced it was suspending a crucial immigration agreement among key European Union countries. The decision to suspend part of the Schengen agreement complicates journeys made by Belgians to Spain and will require them once more to show their passports as they move through immigration controls. Spain is stopping all cooperation between the two countries' judicial systems. It will also suspend an extradition agreement with Belgium and has already refused to hand over a Belgian being held in Spain. Spain has temporarily withdrawn its ambassador in protest at the decision by the Belgian State Council not to deport the terrorist suspects.

Holbrooke warns Serbs

TERENCE GALLAGHER in Budapest and GUY DIMARE in Sarajevo

THE United States will brook no challenges to the Bosnian peace settlement, the US Assistant Secretary of State, Richard Holbrooke, the main architect of the Dayton peace accord, said yesterday. Mr Holbrooke, who travels to Sarajevo, Belgrade and Zagreb over the weekend to try to prevent the settlement unravelling, said in Budapest: "The US will not tolerate the kind of threats that some of the Bosnian Serbs have been making." Mr Holbrooke addressed a news conference after meeting the Hungarian foreign minister, Laszlo Kovacs. "Right now we are encountering some serious challenges to Dayton," he added, citing unrest in the southern city of Mostar and problems over Bosnian Serb soldiers detained by the Bosnian government for alleged war crimes. Nato said yesterday it had lost communication with senior Bosnian Serb army

commanders, a development which Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Walker, the Nato ground commander in Bosnia, called ominous. General Radko Mladic, the main Serb commander, earlier ordered the suspension of all contacts with Nato until two of his officers and at least six other Bosnian Serb soldiers detained by the Muslim-led government in connection with war crimes were released. "I certainly don't think we want to underestimate the dangers of this situation," Gen Walker said, describing the cutting of contacts as the Serbs' "first willful sign of non-compliance" with the requirements of the Dayton peace accord. But despite attempts by Gen Mladic to stop Serb civilians crossing the dividing lines with Muslim-Croat territory in Bosnia, Serbs continued to cross. "The border will not be closed," Maksim Stanisic, mayor of the Serb-held part of Sarajevo, said. A key principle of the Dayton peace is free movement across former front lines. One Serb civilian in Ildza,

a Serb suburb of the Bosnian capital, said he hoped people would continue to cross freely. "During the war Mladic was God. But now he is not. There is a big question mark over him," he said. On his first visit to Sarajevo, Prince Charles expressed his horror yesterday at the hurt done to the people and the cultural monuments of the Bosnian capital. Wading through thick snow and debris in the burnt-out remains of Sarajevo's once-splendid National Library, Prince Charles expressed "horror at the wanton destruction not only of buildings like this but also of peoples' lives." As part of his tour to Croatia and Bosnia, Prince Charles inspected the war-damaged cathedral, palaces and monasteries of the medieval port city of Dubrovnik in Croatia on Thursday. Yesterday he met senior British commanders, including Gen Walker, and inspected some of the British troops stationed in Sarajevo. — Reuters.

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Making waves in a sea of troubles

John Hooper, southern Europe correspondent, looks at the bristling tension over contested territories between two Nato allies

RICHARD Holbrooke, the American diplomat who won global acclaim for brokering the Bosnia peace deal, should have been landing in Ankara later today, at the start of an even more ambitious initiative. His stated aim: to lay the foundations for a lasting settlement between Greece and Turkey before his departure from the state department 11 days later.

One of those he was due to see said Mr Holbrooke had secured the use of a US air force jet so as not to be tied by airline schedules as he shuttled between Greece, Turkey and the divided island of Cyprus. According to a ministerial source in the region, he had decided that, if there were grounds for progress, he would seek to be made President Clinton's special representative in the area.



Admiral Christos Lyberis: first casualty of islet spat

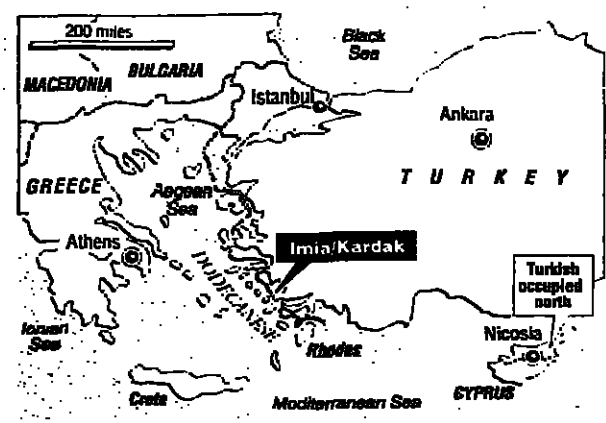
secretary of state into the thick of the Greece-Turkish imbroglio, winning him renewed praise and respect. On January 30, he worked till midnight to defuse the crisis in telephone calls to Athens and Ankara.

What ever his intentions, they now lie in pieces — dashed to bits on a rock inhabited entirely by goats. The islet of Imia (in Greek), or Kardak (in Turkish), was the latest motive for a perilous stand-off in the Aegean. For a while, though, it looked as if the dispute might nevertheless help matters. It propelled the assistant

But this is a part of the world which has a habit of generating paradoxes. And on this occasion the very compromise which Mr Holbrooke had bludgeoned the two sides into accepting proved to be his nemesis. It brought Greece's new prime minister, Costas Simitis, under withering fire from the press and opposition in his own country. His position became almost untenable when it was announced from Washington that Mr Holbrooke's long-awaited visit



Flag day... Turkish Cypriot villagers welcome Turkish troops on the Kyrenia-Nicosia road during their invasion of the island in 1974. Despite its continuing division, Cyprus is on course for European Union membership as early as 1998



Isles torn by geography and politics

THE continuing row over the islands of the Dodecanese seems pointless, even childish — until you look at a map. Imia, or Kardak, the islet which sparked off the latest dispute, is less than four miles from the Turkish coast.

The invasion of the newly born Turkish state by Greek troops in 1919 left, deep in the national psyche, a conviction that it would always be vulnerable to attack from the Aegean. Despite the growth of Turkey's military might since then, the diplomatic resolution of two world wars has served to keep that sensitivity alive. In 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne, which shared out the Ottoman Empire after its defeat in the first world war, gave Greece most of the islands in the eastern Aegean. Nevertheless, a buffer remained in the form of Italy's control of the Dodecanese. In 1947, following Italy's defeat in the second world war, that delicate balance was upset when the chain of islands was handed to Greece.

Cascade of Nato weapons

TURKEY and Greece are steadily upgrading their armed forces at a time when most west European countries are cutting their defence budgets. They are among the world's biggest importers of conventional weapons. And despite the long history of antagonism between them, they have been fed many of their arms without charge by Nato, under its "Cascade" programme to dispose of weapons shed under the treaty on Con-

rather the Greek Cypriot

vention. For precisely the same reasons, though, Greek diplomats argue that the Americans should be more wary of Ankara — and that, if they are not, they could end up repeating the mistakes they made with the Shah. The European Union yesterday moved to defend itself against charges by Mr Holbrooke that it had failed to play a role in the resolution of a crisis on its own doorstep. Earlier this week, he said European diplomats and politicians had been "literally sleeping through the night" while he and President Clinton had been solving their Aegean problems.

John Roper of the Royal

Institute of International Affairs noted that "because Greece is a member of the EU and Turkey is not, the Aegean issue has tended to be dealt with in Nato, of which both countries are members. I understand that Nato's secretary-general, Javier Solana, spoke to senior people in both governments." The Europeans can also argue that, because of Mr Holbrooke, they have been lured into what one called a "possibly very dangerous game" on Cyprus. According to American sources, it was Mr Hol-

brooke who last year played

the key role in getting EU governments to accept a trade-off demanded by Athens: talks on the accession of Cyprus in return for lifting Greece's veto on the customs union sought by Turkey. On March 6, EU foreign ministers gave an unconditional pledge that negotiations on making Cyprus a member of the Union would start six months after the end of the intergovernmental conference to revise the Maastricht Treaty. That probably means the start of 1998. Cyprus — or

rather the Greek Cypriot

state, run by the Cyprus government — has a strong economy. "We estimate that the accession negotiations should take no more than two years," says the Cyprus government's foreign minister, Alesos Michaelides. Cyprus, therefore, could be in the EU before the turn of the century. For many member states, that is a terrifying prospect. The island is divided by barbed wire, and more than a third of it is occupied by Turkish soldiers. With Greek Cypriots yearning for access to the Turkish-occupied north, a showdown between the EU and Turkey would become inevitable as soon as they attempted to exercise their right to freedom of movement within the EU. Mr Holbrooke is said to have argued that an inexorable approaching deadline could nevertheless be used to solve the Cyprus dispute.

republic will open the way for

Turkish accession. Mr Talat and his Republican Turkish Party, the minority partners in a ruling coalition, want a solution before accession, but are ready to accept the accession of Cyprus before that of Turkey. However, the TRNC's president, Rauf Denktaş, remains altogether more cautious and negative about EU entry. "It will take us into the field of Greece won't it?" he said. His argument, which has authoritative backing in Ankara, is that under the agreements leading to Cypriot independence the island can only become a member of international organisations to which both motherlands belong. That implies the accession of Turkey before that of Cyprus. The gap between the parties may be more bridgable than a decade ago. But if the EU is to have any chance of spanning it within the next three years, it is going to have to work with speed and determination. So far, there is not much sign of it. At the end of last month, the EU's foreign ministers named their own Cyprus troubleshooter: Federico Di Roberto. Italy's former ambassador in Moscow.

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1.20 Haggis Way
2.00 Rockwell Run
2.30 Verdict

1.00 BANTHAM HURDLE (10) 2m 21.50

- 1 GOLD RUSH (10) E Ayles 8-11-4
2 BARBARA VALLEY (10) J Patten 8-11-0
3 CHANTY CRUSAIDER Mrs M Rowley 5-1-0

1.30 BANTHAM HURDLE (10) 2m 21.50

- 1 GOLD RUSH (10) E Ayles 8-11-4
2 BARBARA VALLEY (10) J Patten 8-11-0
3 CHANTY CRUSAIDER Mrs M Rowley 5-1-0

2.00 SUN FORTS CLUB NOVICE HURDLE CHASE 2m 41.50

- 1 4-21-82 ROCKY HILL (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 6-23-81 EAST HURDLE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 6-23-81 EAST HURDLE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

2.30 WHITELIST CONDITIONAL JOCKEY CLIPPING HURDLE 2m 42.00

- 1 4P-PP AMBERLEY HARVEST (10) O'Neill 8-11-4
2 23-01-81 BARBARA VALLEY (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 31-01-81 YANBUCK (10) M Rowley 5-1-0

3.00 BELMONT BELLS CHALLENGER CUP HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 12-27-81 FIVE STAR (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 11-23-81 ALPS KILN (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 11-23-81 ALPS KILN (10) J Patten 8-11-4

3.30 CARRIBROO JUVENILE HURDLE 470 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

4.00 CARRIBROO HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

4.30 FISHERTON HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 4-20-81 CITIZEN MAID (10) E Ayles 8-11-4
2 5-21-81 STAMM THE CASE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 5-21-81 STAMM THE CASE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

5.00 WINTY HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

Lingfield (A.W. Flat)

- 2.05 Fortepied
2.15 Simply Kaiti
2.05 Ravel

2.05 RED ROSE SELLING HURDLE 10m 42.00

- 1 3-20-81 HARRY (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 3-20-81 HARRY (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 3-20-81 HARRY (10) J Patten 8-11-4

3.05 HONOR CLAIMING STAKES 10m 42.00

- 1 1-1-81 CHACHILLA (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 1-1-81 CHACHILLA (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 1-1-81 CHACHILLA (10) J Patten 8-11-4

3.35 JACK & BELL COUP HURDLE 10m 42.00

- 1 2-20-81 SECRET SPINNING (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 2-20-81 SECRET SPINNING (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 2-20-81 SECRET SPINNING (10) J Patten 8-11-4

4.05 DESSERTS DIAMOND HURDLE 10m 42.00

- 1 3-1-81 HAWTHORN (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 3-1-81 HAWTHORN (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 3-1-81 HAWTHORN (10) J Patten 8-11-4

4.35 SWEETHEART HURDLE 10m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

Racing

Conditions look right for Pridwell to plunder Gold

Chris Hawkins
AGAINST all the odds today's Tote Gold Trophy (Europe's richest handicap hurdle) has survived, but if the forecast overnight rain materialises the going at Newbury is likely to be very soft or even heavy.

little chance on the book with Pridwell (now 18lb better off) on Haydock form last month. That was Moorish's first year of the season, but he finished tailed off behind My-silv, a race in which Pridwell was third.

Catterick

- 1.45 Copper Coll
2.50 River Wye
3.50 River Wye
3.50 River Wye

Southwell (A.W. Flat)

- 1.15 Laneswood Junior
1.45 The Old Ark
2.45 The Old Ark

1.45 SUN FORTS CLUB NOVICE HURDLE CHASE 2m 41.50

- 1 20-21-81 NEW CHARGES (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 20-21-81 NEW CHARGES (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 20-21-81 NEW CHARGES (10) J Patten 8-11-4

1.15 WINTER BELLING HURDLE (10) 2m 42.00

- 1 100-0-0 CALLING JANAGRA (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 100-0-0 CALLING JANAGRA (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 100-0-0 CALLING JANAGRA (10) J Patten 8-11-4

2.00 LEVY BOUND HURDLE ONLY NOVICE HURDLE 2m 42.00

- 1 1-1-81 DEAR BELLY (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 1-1-81 DEAR BELLY (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 1-1-81 DEAR BELLY (10) J Patten 8-11-4

1.45 WINTER HURDLE (10) 2m 42.00

- 1 100-0-0 CALLING JANAGRA (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 100-0-0 CALLING JANAGRA (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 100-0-0 CALLING JANAGRA (10) J Patten 8-11-4

2.30 WINTY HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

2.15 WINTER HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

2.50 WINTY HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

2.45 WINTER HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

3.00 RED OREGON NATIONAL TROT HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 21-10-81 HONOR CLAIMING STAKES (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 21-10-81 HONOR CLAIMING STAKES (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 21-10-81 HONOR CLAIMING STAKES (10) J Patten 8-11-4

3.15 WINTER HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

4.00 BISHOP HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

4.15 WINTER HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

4.50 BISHOP HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
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3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

4.45 WINTER HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

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3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

5.00 WINTY HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

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3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

5.15 WINTER HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

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3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

5.30 WINTY HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
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5.45 WINTER HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
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3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

6.00 WINTY HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
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3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

6.15 WINTER HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
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3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

6.30 WINTY HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

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3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

6.45 WINTER HURDLE CHASE 2m 42.00

- 1 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4
3 10-11-81 DEEVALE (10) J Patten 8-11-4

Leopardstown tomorrow

- 3.45 Honorary Deputy Club Cup Chase 2m 42.00
1 20-1-81 FLASHING STAR (10) J Patten 8-11-4
2 20-1-81 FLASHING STAR (10) J Patten 8-11-4

Results

- SOUTHWELL
1.10 (7) S. AMANITA, 1 Weaver 7-11
2.10 (7) S. AMANITA, 1 Weaver 7-11
3.10 (7) S. AMANITA, 1 Weaver 7-11

Newbury with TV form

- 1.10 Cannon Valley
1.40 Haggis Way
2.15 Rockwell Run
2.45 Verdict

BBC-1

- 1.10 BANTHAM HURDLE CHASE 2m 21.50
109 590-20 GHATAM (7) (10) M Pate 12-10-0
108 214-24 FLYERS MAP (10) R Ayles 10-11-0

BBC-1

- 1.40 HONOR CLAIMING STAKES 10m 42.00
201 302-25 DANICA PADDY (10) M Pate 12-10-0
202 302-25 DANICA PADDY (10) M Pate 12-10-0

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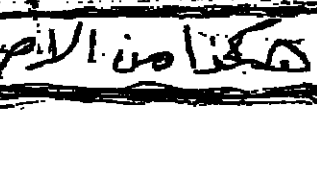
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United £65m jackpot
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Soccer

United hit £65m jackpot

Ian Ross and Martin Thorpe

THE ever-widening financial gap between soccer's rich and poor was highlighted yesterday when Manchester United signed a sponsorship deal worth £55 million — the biggest in the British game's history.

Although the Premiership's wealthiest club declined to confirm the figures, the six-year kit and general merchandising contract with Umbro easily beats the previous record of £25 million over four years between Liverpool and Reebok.

"It is commercially sensitive to discuss figures, but this contract does reflect United's standing in the sport," said Umbro's Peter Kenyon.

Umbro's current deal with United had two years to run, but it is believed that the club decided to re-open its chequebook after learning that its most prized client was being actively courted by at least one of its major competitors.

It is good news for the United manager Alex Ferguson: he can expect at least £12 million for new players.

The PFA chief executive Gordon Taylor yesterday

warned clubs to make sure that any foreign players they were thinking of buying met the Department for Employment's strict criteria — otherwise they would not be granted a work permit.

The department's refusal to renew permits for the Dumitrescu and Marc Hottiger signals the end to flexible interpretations of the criteria as they attempt to reduce the flow of foreign players into this country. Both the department and the PFA intend to strictly enforce the guidelines from now on.

"It is not our job to be flexible when imports are not living up to their reputation and are straining home-grown talent," said Taylor. "Only by saying that the criteria will be applied strictly will the clubs exercise caution."

The next casualty could be the Brazilian full-back Branco who is due to join Middlesbrough. But he has not won the requisite number of international caps entitling him to a work permit.

It is understood that many clubs are upset by the clampdown and some have taken the matter up with MPE and the department direct. Meanwhile the result of appeals by Dumitrescu and Hottiger are due next week.

Call to protect poor as Fifa attacks European shake-up

FIFA has criticised Uefa's plans to expand its club competition to five more places to wealthy teams, warning that action could be taken to protect the game's poorer sectors.

Fifa's president Joao Havelange said: "Fifa is here to work for all in football. We want principles that apply to everyone."

The general secretary Sepp Blatter added that Fifa was prepared to take steps at its July congress to guarantee equal treatment to all.

"There is a danger of having two laws — one for the rich and one for the poor," he said.

Monday's meeting to decide Uefa's stance on the Bosman verdict will also discuss whether rich clubs are prepared to pay a levy to the poorer clubs hardest hit by the new transfer ruling.

Ten countries, including England, Scotland, France, Italy and Germany, will meet in Windsor to formulate a united policy on Bosman to be presented to Uefa on February 16.

They will also discuss whether to change the restrictions on the number of non-European Union players a club can field.

England will play in a foundation tournament against France, Italy and probably Brazil in the run-up to the 1998 World Cup in France.

England agreed to participate in the event in France in summer 1997, even though they will meet Italy in their final World Cup qualifier in Rome the following October.

The former Stoke and England defender Neil Franklin has died, aged 74. Obituary, Outlook, page 23.

A N Other

HE SOUNDED angelic and canonisation was to follow, yet this solid son of Dundee soon convinced opponents that as a footballer he possessed more earthly qualities. He was a hard but clean-tackling half-back in one of the better sides to win the championship when times were starting to swing, making 255 League appearances in the company of sticky comestibles. Later he moved from port to pine to railhead before retiring with a taste of honey.

Last week: Remi Moses (West Bromwich Albion, Manchester United).



Performance of the week: Remi Moses (West Bromwich Albion, Manchester United).

Celtic's knack of coming back satisfies Burns

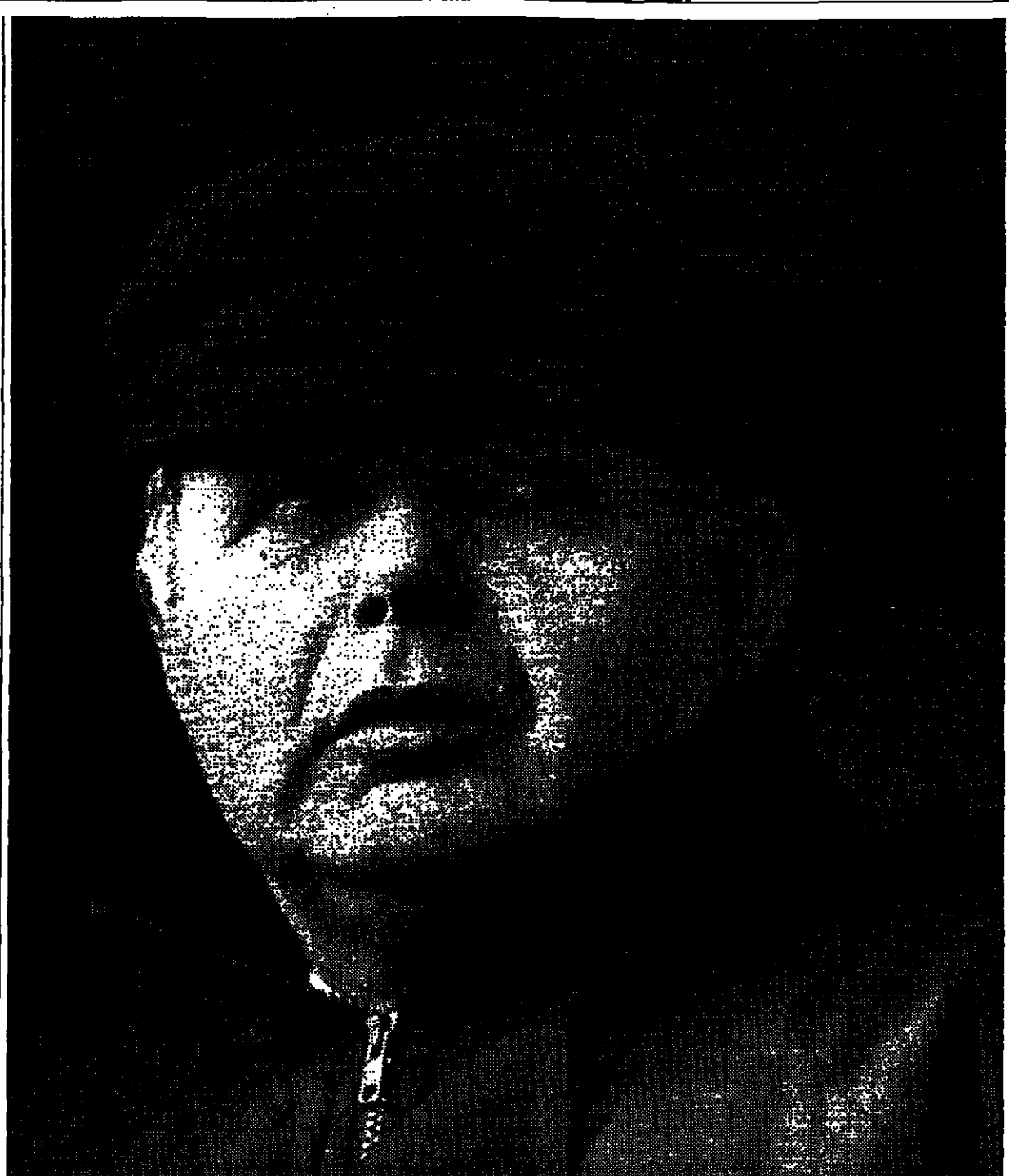
AS SNOW-clearing operation at Brockville, where Falkirk entertain Celtic, has enabled the Old Firm's rivalry for the Scottish title to continue apace in a Premier Division programme today which is likely to beat the weather, writes Patrick Glenn.

Tommy Burns, who has seen his Celtic side come from behind to win three of their last four matches, will not change personnel.

"This squad don't seem to get disheartened if they lose a goal," says Burns. "In recent seasons, with confidence down, that had been one of the faults of Celtic teams. Now they don't panic and keep playing to the style which has served them so well in the last few months."

Injuries again prevent Walter Smith fielding an unchanged Rangers team at home to Motherwell. With his captain Richard Gough still feeling twinges from a damaged back, the young defender Craig Moore is restored.

Moore has been away on international duty with Australia and is likely to replace the veteran John Brown, who stood in against Partick last week. Smith is hopeful that Ally McCoist, recovering from a calf injury, will at least reach the bench.



Calm before the storm... but watch for fireworks from Fry if his side scores first tomorrow. PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEELE

Fry aching to rub shoulders with the Premiership giants

Cynthia Bateman on the manager hoping the Coca-Cola Cup semi-final against Leeds United will provide a boost for the Blues

FRYING to talk to Barry Fry is like trying to swat a butterfly. Every time you think you have him in the net... whoops, there he goes again.

Fry has proved just as hard to peg down to the touchline. The Birmingham City manager was accused of inciting a riot before Christmas when it was suggested that his running on to the pitch had sparked crowd trouble in the match against Millwall.

"People have said if I can run onto the pitch, why shouldn't they, so I suppose they've got a point," said the ebullient Fry. "But I would hate to think I had incited even one person with my celebrations. Everyone knows I'm just showing my delight when one of my lot scores."

When the 50-year-old Fry did try to sit still by seating himself behind the bench he couldn't help racing from end to end of the three-yard dug-out when City scored. "That's about right for me now," he puffed. "I'm too fat to go any further."

Fry has already had two coroners' help racing from end to end of the three-yard dug-out when City scored. "That's about right for me now," he puffed. "I'm too fat to go any further."

Fry has already had two coroners' help racing from end to end of the three-yard dug-out when City scored. "That's about right for me now," he puffed. "I'm too fat to go any further."

is my life. I know that one day I'll jump up to celebrate a goal and I'll drop dead. But I want to go out on a high note."

Notes have not come much higher for City in the past 20 years than their Coca-Cola Cup semi-final first leg against Leeds at St Andrew's tomorrow. And with Leeds on the end of a run of dismal results City have their best chance of progressing to the final of a major competition since they reached the semi-finals of the FA Cup in 1975.

They have been to Wembley since. They won the Leyland Daf Cup in 1991 and last season the Auto Windscreens

again. He already had a squad of 45 professionals on his books and this week he added Vinny Samways, John Sheridan and the Peterborough defender Gary Breen. Samways, on loan from Everton, and Breen are cup-tied tomorrow, but Sheridan, whose month's loan is likely to become a permanent move from Sheffield Wednesday, is eligible.

The former Leeds player will team up with his Elland Road colleague Chris Whyte to take on their old club, who will need no reminding that Sheridan scored the winning goal in the 1991 Coca-Cola Cup final when Wednesday

challenge Aston Villa for the soccer supremacy of the Midlands. And this place will be self-financing once we are rubbing shoulders with Manchester United and the rest."

A place in the Coca-Cola Cup final would help loosen the purse-strings. City won the League Cup as a First Division side in 1968 but they have made heavy weather of this season's competition.

Tomorrow's match will be their 11th, starting with two legs against Plymouth in the first round. They beat Grimsby over two legs in the second round and in the third round they were disposed of after extra-time. Middlesbrough were beaten in a fourth-round replay at St Andrew's and they won the quarter-final against Norwich after a replay in which the captain Liam Daish scored the last-gasp winner.

The Leeds game will be their 45th of the season, and Fry is concerned that his players, who took their neighbours West Bromwich Albion to extra-time in the Anglo-Italian Cup, are suffering not only from match fatigue but over-exposure to yellow cards. Suspensions and injuries will limit his selection for tomorrow and he will be without Daish, Andy Edwards and Gary Poole, three of his regular back four. Fry failed to sign the Internazionale defender Giuseppe Bergomi short-term to fill one of the problem positions.

But the man who began his career as a winger at Old Trafford before dogs and horses got in the way is used to battling the odds. And City supporters know that he wants success even more than they do. "I'm a fan at heart," he said. "I feel for them. That's why I've always wanted my teams to score."

Watch out for a bundle of enthusiasm exploding from the dug-out if City go in front tomorrow.

'My missus thinks I'm selfish and should think more about the kids, but the game is my life'

Shield in front of 51,000 of their fans. But this season Fry, the club's owner David Sullivan and the chief executive Karen Brady set their sights on bigger prizes.

City were promoted to the First Division at the end of last season and St Andrew's has been redeveloped at a cost of £10 million. Fry predicted: "Birmingham are on the brink of a great leap forward, particularly after reaching these semi-finals."

"Fans of the Blues have waited years to see their team in the last four of a major competition. We have whetted their appetites and we can't afford to disappoint them. Success is almost within our grasp — regular success which would pack St Andrew's every week."

But Fry knows that means spend, spend and spend

beat Manchester United. Samways's move has been on the cards for some time and he was prepared to take a substantial wage drop to join City. Fry, however, was £500,000 short on the transfer fee at the first attempt.

He believes that City's co-owners, Sullivan and the Gold brothers, David and Ralph, whose money it is, must make up their minds whether they really want City to move into the big time. "The three of them have given me magnificent financial backing so far, but now we need to make the big push. Achieving Premiership football means paying Premiership transfer fees and wages. There is no other way."

"I know the cash has to come from somewhere, but I firmly believe we are in sight of a massive breakthrough where we can emerge to chal-

Kit cat cops cup kudos

Soccer Diary

Martin Thorpe

OLD Isleworthians have reached the final of the West Middlesex League's Ace Awards Open Cup. Is it thanks to their players? Or their coach? No. It is all down to the fact that the manager's mum's cat peed on the club kit.

Nobody gave the l's a cat in hell's chance against Chiswick Albion in last Sunday's semi-final but they won 1-0. Well done, the kit cat. "My mum always washes the club kit for us at her home, but when we got to the ground this time it absolutely stunk," explained the manager Keith Pearce.

"Her cat Sparky had peed all over it while it was in the bag waiting for me to come round. It was horrible but we had no choice but to wear it as we didn't have anything else."

"Everyone was spraying deodorant over their shirts, but we all forgot about the small when we won the game and all thanks to our lucky kit. My only problem now is how to get the cat to pee on the kit again for the final."

Diane. "Even her dad says to her, you're to blame. She doesn't think she is and says, well at least Paul Mardon still loves me. He was with her when she was the mascot."

Laura is going with dad to today's game at home to Southend hoping for a victory. But as West Brom have discovered, winning is not exactly child's play. So Dad makes one plea: "All we would ask the players is that if they cannot win for themselves, then please win for Laura."

GIVEN that two Charlton players, including Lee Bowyer, were found guilty of taking bribes, it was an unfortunate headline that appeared on the Croydon Advertiser report of their game with Crystal Palace last Sunday. "Eagles' tactics shackle Addicks," Charlton's nickname is the Addicks.

CELTIC have taken on exactly the right man should they ever get into financial trouble again. Their new director Brian Clough is a proven expert in charge of banking supervision over three of the biggest banking scandals of the last 10 years: Barings, BCCI and Johnson and Matthey.

IF Birmingham City were to win the Coca-Cola Cup, writes Nick McKeown of Birmingham, and then went on to beat Galatasaray in the Uefa Cup, would the headline be "Fry's Turkish Delight". These jokes get worse.

A STRANGE chant can often be heard from Watford's Vicarage Road end: "Old git, old git, give us a wave." And Peter Lawson, a 65-year-old retired plumber and Watford steward, usually does.

"I didn't take any notice when it first started," says Peter, "and I don't mind actually. I take it in the spirit that I hope it is intended."

The word "git" is reputed to originate from the Arabic for a pregnant camel. But in relation to Peter, it is more a term of endearment from the younger element in the crowd with whom he has earned begrudging respect despite forever telling them to sit down.

"They think I should be some give a wave and if we get the job done without being confrontational and they call me old git, then I'm not bothered. Sometimes they even come up and want my rudely autograph. And what does it matter? I've got the job done without being confrontational and they call me old git, then I'm not bothered. Sometimes I just write The Old Git."

TEAM SHEET

Bolton v Aston Villa
The striker McGinley and defender Stubbs are doubtful for Bolton with calf and foot injuries respectively. McGinley's absence may make a recall of Hulse, demoted to the bench last weekend. Thompson could make his first start for nine weeks in midfield after a hernia operation. For Villa the defender Ekeogu and striker Johnson may return, but are far from certain to displace Staunton and Taylor, who impressed in the 3-0 win over Leeds.

Coventry City v Chelsea
Molloy could be promoted from the bench for Coventry to replace the 36-year-old assistant manager Ericsson, who played in last weekend's 1-1 draw at Arsenal and the midweek 2-2 Cup tie with Manchester City. Chelsea's captain, Wise, returns after a two-match ban, but Daberry and Hughes are still suspended. Hitchcock remains in goal with Kutarze playing for Poole in Malta.

Everton v Manchester City
Ridout is out of Everton's forward line with a thigh strain, along with Kanchelskis, who is in for the Blues. Anokhich is brought into the squad, as is the defender Andrew Brown. Kevin Quinn has passed a test on a hamstring problem and returns after missing the game at Coventry. But Ian Wright will be doubtful with calf trouble.

Manchester Utd v Blackburn
May be set to face his former team-mates as the answer to Alex Ferguson's defensive problems, which have ruled out Bruce with a sustained forehead as well as Gary Neville, who starts a two-match ban. But Phillips returns for his first Premiership start since November after recovering from back trouble. Blackburn's winger Wilcox may reappear for the champions after 11 months out with a cruciate ligament injury. Popley is definitely missing and the Norwegian midfielder Bohman is also doubtful after picking up a calf strain. Leanne, Barrie and Sutton are still missing, while Barry remains out of favour.

Middlesbrough v Newcastle
Fiorent and Wilkinson are contesting the target-man role for out-of-form Middlesbrough. Wilkinson played in the midweek

Sheff Wed v Wimbledon
The Yugoslav international Kovacic and Stanovic are likely to return to David Pleet's team. Kovacic is in place of a regular substitute's appearance in last weekend's 2-0 defeat at Newcastle. Wimbledon's captain Earle and the Nigerian striker Ekeogu are back after two-match bans, with Costello and Hartford set to make a day. The Moroccan goalkeeper, who missed the midweek 0-0 FA Cup draw at Middlesbrough, returns from international game in midfield, probably for Tallboys. De Smedt, who pulled hamstring at Barns, is doubtful. His probable replacement is Pearce, signed for £700,000 from Wednesday earlier this season.

TOMORROW
QPR v Liverpool
Barclay returns to full-back after injury to Ray Wilkins' troubled Rangers and will probably replace Manning with Yates moving into the centre of defence. The midfielder trophy man is recalled, while the second-choice goalkeeper Roberts is likely to be on the bench after completing a suspension. Liverpool's England midfielder Redmond, who has not started a Premiership match since Newcastle, could be back in the line-up at the likely expense of Thomas.

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CRICKET: THE SIXTH WORLD CUP

Curtain up on the one-day circus. Our writers assess two key players and, below, Mike Selvey and David Hopps weigh the merits of the competing nations

World goes in to bat on a sticky wicket

OF ALL six World Cups this, the second to be held on the sub-continent could prove to be the most acrimonious. Its conception, involving wheeler-dealing and inducements, was not the happiest of bases. Now, with security taking a priority over practice facilities they will be at best distracted and at worst, it seems, not even there.

Lanka, when newspaper articles began talking of a \$100 million bonanza, compared to the \$3 million at most that accrued from the previous effort on the sub-continent. That return in 1987, it was freely admitted at the time, was no adequate return on the premier competition in world cricket but, with the help of some pretty sturdy interests — the Mark McCormack Group, IMG, has been employed to handle the Pakistan side of things — no such mistakes are going to be made this time.

Television rights are astronomical, sponsorship abundant, marketing and merchandising advanced and peripheral opportunities everywhere; for example, a hotel in Chandigarh, venue for a semi-final and a city not exactly replete in five-star accommodation, has attempted (unsuccessfully) to extort \$500 per night from travelling groups for a room.

was still an occasion, in front of a full Eden Gardens in Calcutta and every bit as magical as the last final under lights in Melbourne. This time the stories have been much the same with, for example, major buildings work still going on at the stadium in Lahore that will stage the final. And rest assured that the partners will still be there at the ground in Ahmedabad on Tuesday night, just hours before England and New Zealand contest the first of the 37 matches that will be played in 27 venues. But in the end things seem to be done. This tournament, conceived in arrogance, will work simply because it has to. The loss of face should it not be successful would be too horrible to contemplate.

Pakistan looks to Wasim to restore national pride

Paul Allott on the all-rounder who came of age as captain and diplomat in Australia

ALWAYS thought I would be asked to lead Pakistan in the World Cup," said Wasim Akram, "but I needed a test of character — a hard tour, to prepare myself. He got his wish in Australia — with a vengeance.

they had been offered huge sums to throw games. Nothing was proved but Salim Malik was relieved of the Pakistan captaincy pending an investigation by the Board of Control for Cricket in Pakistan. Salim was then picked to tour Australia, whose press was still baying for his blood.

member of the team realised that this was going to be a bridge-building tour. Pakistan were perceived very poorly in world cricket. Australia was going to be extraordinarily uncomfortable for us didn't make friends, with crowds and players alike.

quivering batsman. The next over might find him bowling each ball gun-barrel straight, as if to demonstrate his exceptional talent.

Last October Pakistan were in turmoil. They had lost their first home Test series for 15 years — to Sri Lanka of all people. They also lost the one-day series. This was bad enough but worse were lingering stories of betting and bribery on the earlier Australia tour of Pakistan. Tim May and Shane Warne alleged

It was hardly an ideal scenario for Wasim as incoming captain: poor results, disillusioned players, a disenchanted public at home and a distinctly hostile one waiting in Australia. Yet, far from flinching at the prospect of becoming his country's captain and ambassador, he relished it.

Wasim credits his opposite number Mark Taylor for his efforts in turning what could have been a most unpleasant tour into a series that saw the tourists described as "one of the friendliest teams ever to tour Australia".

His Yorker is phenomenal, giving the waiting batsman a feeling that John Major might understand with a general election looming: he knows it is coming but cannot do anything about it.



Wasim...bully no more

Without doubt Pakistan's outstanding player, Wasim was more mature than when he captained the side two years earlier and was usurped in a players' coup for being too strict, too much of a bully. He is man enough now to admit that he deserved it.

Fearfully quick off a short but explosive run-up, he swings the ball both ways — so late and at such pace that even accomplished batsmen can look almost comical as they struggle against him.

Wasim will be back with Lancashire in 1997. "I miss the place," he says. "It's become more like home to me." He names Lancashire's 1995 side as the best he has played



All-out effort... Wasim collides with New Zealand's Chris Harris in the 1992 World Cup semi-final

with during his time at the club. He has become good mates with David Lloyd, whom he rates as the best manager-coach he has seen. He gives Lloyd credit and thanks for making him captain of Lancashire for five matches last season. All the games were won and in each

he is an outstanding player but as a person Pakistan's players, after Australia, feel the same way. Wasim is determined that Pakistan put up a good performance in the World Cup. "I want emphatic wins in our first two games against New Zealand and Holland and I

of them Wasim was seen at his best. He now knows that he can thrive on responsibility and that to get the best out of players he needs to cajole, be supportive but above all be honest with them. He knows also that the Lancashire players respect him, not just because

he is an outstanding player but as a person Pakistan's players, after Australia, feel the same way. Wasim is determined that Pakistan put up a good performance in the World Cup. "I want emphatic wins in our first two games against New Zealand and Holland and I

Australia

THE more England ridicules Australians as wimps for refusing to play in Sri Lanka, the more likely they are to capitulate in their response. Victorious under Allan Border in Asia in 1987, Australia have the ability to repeat their success under the more subtle leadership of Mark Taylor. The decisive replacement of the veteran Boon by the brilliant youngster Ponting, the return of Bevan and the introduction of one-day specialists, Law and Lee, in the middle order ensure that Australia will field (and doubtless bat) brilliantly. But who knows whether Warne's nerve will hold after his bribery allegations against Salim Akram? Australia pray that the draw keeps them away from Pakistan until the final.

Pakistan

IMRAN KHAN'S famous "cornered tigers" speech roused them from the depths last time, and they beat England in a memorable Final. Victorious under Allan Border in Asia in 1987, Australia have the ability to repeat their success under the more subtle leadership of Mark Taylor. The decisive replacement of the veteran Boon by the brilliant youngster Ponting, the return of Bevan and the introduction of one-day specialists, Law and Lee, in the middle order ensure that Australia will field (and doubtless bat) brilliantly. But who knows whether Warne's nerve will hold after his bribery allegations against Salim Akram? Australia pray that the draw keeps them away from Pakistan until the final.

India

INDIA'S build-up to the World Cup has been light, with only a short rain-affected Test series against New Zealand to detain them. Unless pre-tournament rehearsals have wrought a transformation, inferior fielding risks a scornful reaction from partisan crowds. Kapil Dev has not been satisfactorily replaced as an all-rounder. But home advantage is considerable, especially outside the major centres; and, if Tendulkar thrives as an opening batsman, runs should be in plentiful supply. The captain Azharuddin is a stroke-maker who can destroy the best attacks and has scored over 5,000 runs in this form of cricket. He will be a key man. Kamble and Prabhakar are challenging bowlers at the death, and will need to be.

South Africa

STILL chattering on about the rain rule that they firmly believe robbed them of a place in the last final, and with the national rugby and soccer teams displaying silverware, desperately keen to make amends now. Along with Australia they are light years ahead of the opposition in preparation, coaching and attention to detail. Spunked England last month, so current form appears to be good. Playing strengths lie in a high-class pace attack (augmented by the return to fitness of their best bowler Fanie De Villiers), the novelty value of Paul Adams, the most electrifying fielding in the history of the game, and massive self-belief. Despite its depth, however, the batting is little more than adequate and prone to English-style collapses. Potential winners if this comes right.

Mark Taylor, (capt), age 31, left-hand batsman. Struggled to establish himself in Australia's one-day side early in his international career but Taylor has since blossomed as a limited-overs batsman after assuming the captaincy from Allan Border two years ago. He is shrewd. One-day internationals played: 69. Runs: 2,634 (HS 97), ave: 33.34. Michael Statar, 25, right-hand batsman. Unchallenged as Test opener, Statar has scored 102 runs in 11 one-day matches during recent World Series. Played: 33. Runs: 765 (HS 73), ave: 23.18. Mark Waugh, 30, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. Increasingly looking to establish himself as a Test batsman. Gradually assumed McDermott's mantle as Australia's main strike bowler this season, striking a fierce competitive edge. Played: 44. Runs: 371 (HS 10), ave: 3.71. Wkts: 62 (BB 5-52), ave: 24.39. Paul Reiffel, 29, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast bowler. Vital member of the one-day side for his unerring accuracy and ability to move the ball. A capable lower-order batsman. Played: 55. Runs: 365 (HS 59), ave: 18.25. Wkts: 74 (BB 4-13), ave: 21.00. Damien Fleming, 25, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium fast bowler. Has returned to the international stage after injury cut short his tour to West Indies last year. Played: 14. Runs: 14 (HS 5), ave: 14.00. Wkts: 20 (BB 4-39), ave: 26.85. Shane Warne, 26, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. Match-winner in both Test and one-day cricket. A big spinner of the ball, with a potent flipper. Warne also bowls with remarkable accuracy and rarely suffers heavy punishment. Played: 52. Runs: 240 (HS 55), ave: 14.12. Wkts: 87 (BB 4-19), ave: 21.49. ONE TO WATCH: Ricky Ponting Odds: 100-30 fav.

Shane Lee, 22, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. Lee burst into the side's public eye on the strength of his powerful batting in the lower middle order. Played: 6. Runs: 52 (HS 39), ave: 13.00. Wkts: 4 (BB 1-20), ave: 44.00. Ian Healy, 31, right-hand batsman, wicketkeeper. Fierce batsman behind the stumps and effective batsman at No. 7 or eight where he is renowned for his improvised shots late in the innings. Most dangerous as batsman at times of crisis. Played: 139. Runs: 1,498 (HS 56), ave: 23.38. Catches: 167. Stumpings: 29. Craig McDermott, 30, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast bowler. Increasingly looking to establish himself as a Test batsman. Gradually assumed McDermott's mantle as Australia's main strike bowler this season, striking a fierce competitive edge. Played: 44. Runs: 371 (HS 10), ave: 3.71. Wkts: 62 (BB 5-52), ave: 24.39. Paul Reiffel, 29, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast bowler. Vital member of the one-day side for his unerring accuracy and ability to move the ball. A capable lower-order batsman. Played: 55. Runs: 365 (HS 59), ave: 18.25. Wkts: 74 (BB 4-13), ave: 21.00. Damien Fleming, 25, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium fast bowler. Has returned to the international stage after injury cut short his tour to West Indies last year. Played: 14. Runs: 14 (HS 5), ave: 14.00. Wkts: 20 (BB 4-39), ave: 26.85. Shane Warne, 26, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. Match-winner in both Test and one-day cricket. A big spinner of the ball, with a potent flipper. Warne also bowls with remarkable accuracy and rarely suffers heavy punishment. Played: 52. Runs: 240 (HS 55), ave: 14.12. Wkts: 87 (BB 4-19), ave: 21.49. ONE TO WATCH: Ricky Ponting Odds: 100-30 fav.

Wasim Akram (capt), age 29, left-hand batsman, left-arm fast bowler. First named captain in 1989, he was replaced in favour of the more experienced Imran Khan following a players' revolt but was appointed for a second spell last October. Bowling off a shortish run, he produces pace, swing and bounce, with a tailing yorker. Can be an explosive batsman. Played: 193. Runs: 1,746 (HS 86), ave: 14.55. Wkts: 282 (BB 5-15), ave: 22.90. Aamer Sohail, 29, left-hand batsman, slow left-arm bowler. Attacking opener with a wide range of strokes who has been touted for playing at his best on the big occasion. Played: 85. Runs: 2,681 (HS 134), ave: 32.30. Wkts: 59 (BB 4-22), ave: 35.22. Javed Miandad, 38, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. Former captain. Wristy stroke-maker who hit century on Test debut with 163 against New Zealand. His average of 62.57 for his 124 Tests illustrates his consistently prolific form. Played: 228. Runs: 7,327 (HS 179), ave: 41.86. Salim Malik, 32, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. Was at the centre of the infamous bribery allegations who was alleged by three Australians to have offered them money to play poorly in a Test during 1984 series in Pakistan. Played: 214. Runs: 5,441 (HS 102), ave: 30.91. Wkts: 55 (BB 5-35), ave: 32.64. Inzamam-ul-Haq, 25, right-hand batsman. Stole the spotlight with some thrilling batting during last World Cup in Australia and New Zealand four years ago. Powerful hitter of the ball whose great strength is on the leg side. Played: 96. Runs: 3,307 (HS 137), ave: 41.32. Ramiz Raja, 33, right-hand batsman. Younger brother of the former Test all-rounder Wasim Raja, Ramiz enjoyed a successful 1992 World Cup in which he hit two hundreds. Played: 170. Runs: 5,257 (HS 179), ave: 33.69. Saad Anwar, 27, left-hand batsman, slow left-arm bowler. Eight one-day hundreds include a top score of 131 against West Indies. Played: 82. Runs: 2,541 (HS 131), ave: 33.88. Wkts: 3 (BB 1-9), ave: 43.33. Ijaz Ahmed, 27, right-hand

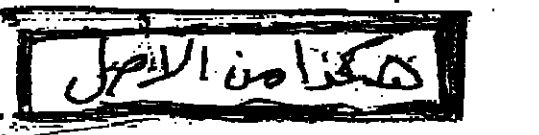
batman, left-arm medium pace bowler. Played the first of his 24 Tests in 1989-91, since when he has figured more often in the Pakistan limited overs team. Played: 121. Runs: 2,391 (HS 124), ave: 26.56. Wkts: 3 (BB 2-31), ave: 90.66. Rashid Latif, 27, right-hand batsman, wicketkeeper. Playing fast bowling with a good, equally adept behind the stumps against pace and spin. Played: 70. Runs: 4,517 (HS 35), ave: 15.20. Catches: 68. Stumpings: 18. Waqar Younis, 24, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast bowler. Missed the 1992 World Cup because of a stress fracture of the lower back and subsequent injury problems interrupted his career in 1994-95. A devastating left-hand bowler with swinging deliveries, including reverse swing, and lethal yorkers. Played: 112. Runs: 336 (HS 37), ave: 5.02. Wkts: 134 (BB 6-26), ave: 22.02. Aaqib Javed, 23, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast medium bowler. Made first-class debut at the age of 14 and developed into an accurate bowler able to swing ball both ways. Played: 121. Runs: 144 (HS 21), ave: 10.28. Wkts: 134 (BB 7-37), ave: 31.05. Ata-Ur-Rehman, 20, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium-fast bowler. His wickets in one-day games have been costly. Played: 25. Runs: 27 (HS 11), ave: 6.75. Wkts: 21 (BB 3-32), ave: 46.66. Mushtaq Ahmed, 25, right-hand batsman, leg-spinner. Made his mark with significant spells to help Pakistan win last World Cup but proved uneven performer in Tests and was dropped in early 1995. Played: 9. Runs: 263 (HS 26), ave: 9.06. Wkts: 99 (BB 3-14), ave: 33.29. Saqlain Mushtaq, 19, right-hand batsman, off-spinner. Made Test debut in home series against Sri Lanka last September, showing promise with nine wickets in two matches. Played: 5. Runs: 30 (HS 30), ave: 15.00. Wkts: 8 (BB 4-47), ave: 21.62. ONE TO WATCH: Wasim Akram ODDS: 7-2.

Mohammad Azharuddin (capt), age 32, right-hand batsman. Elegant stroke-maker who burst on to the international scene with a century in each of his first three Tests, in the 1984-5 home series against England. Problems with short-pitched fast bowling led to a lean spell in the late 1980s but a technical adjustment helped him to recover touch and artistry. Played: 199. Runs: 5,400 (HS 108), ave: 96.24. Sachin Tendulkar, 22, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium-pace bowler. All timing, balance and grace, he has developed into an outstanding batting talent since his Test debut at 16. Bats in the middle-order in Tests but has been pushed up to open in one-dayers. Utility bowler. Played: 101. Runs: 3,201 (HS 151), ave: 31.7. Wkts: 34 (BB 4-9), ave: 51.75. Manoj Prabhakar, 32, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium-fast bowler. One of the longest-serving members of the squad, he can be a highly accurate bowler moving the ball both in the air and off the pitch. Played: 125. Runs: 1,844 (HS 106), ave: 24.91. Wkts: 154 (BB 5-33), ave: 28.42. Ajay Jadhava, 25, right-hand batsman. Belongs to the family of Farjallah, the Indian prince who played for England 100 years ago. Has been in and out of the side but cemented his place with a series of big scores recently. Fine batsman. Played: 42. Runs: 1,166 (HS 104), ave: 33.31. Navtej Sidhu, 32, right-hand batsman. Lean and efficient opener who has been moved to the No. 3 slot to admit Tendulkar's promotion at one-day level. Strong fielder. Played: 82. Runs: 3,467 (HS 194), ave: 42.80. Vinod Kamble, 24, left-hand batsman. The only left-hander in the squad who has been regularly shuffled about in the order. A stylish stroke-player. Played: 67. Runs: 1,741 (HS 107), ave: 40.43. Sanjay Manjrekar, 30, right-hand batsman. Sturdy middle-order bat who has put erratic performance behind him to become a sheet anchor. Played: 59. Runs: 1,604 (HS 105), ave: 34.86. Mayan Mongia, 26, right-hand

batman, wicketkeeper. Steady performer behind the stumps who bolsters the lower-order batting. Played: 34. Runs: 239 (HS 40), ave: 23.90. Catches: 41, stumpings: 12. Anil Kumble, 25, right-hand batsman, leg-spinner. Lanky, bespectacled wrist-spinner who spearheads attack with his headless, economical deliveries, including a strong flipper. A shrewd strategist who bowls tightly even in the slog overs. Played: 71. Runs: 171 (HS 24), ave: 9.00. Wkts: 87 (BB 6-12), ave: 29.68. Javagal Srinath, 27, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast bowler. Quickest bowler in the squad, he has emerged as the new-ball replacement for Kapil Dev. Played: 82. Runs: 176 (HS 37), ave: 8.80. Wkts: 118 (BB 5-24), ave: 25.22. Venkatesh Prasad, 26, right-hand batsman, left-arm spinner. With his speedy line and length, he played a leading role in India in the 1992 World Cup in Australia and New Zealand but has been relegated to the background by Kumble's consistent performances. Played: 42. Runs: 29 (HS 6), ave: 3.00. Wkts: 45 (BB 4-46), ave: 33.26. Aashish Kapoor, 24, right-hand batsman, off-spinner. Has played only one Test but adjusts well to limited-overs cricket by varying his flight. Played: 7. Runs: 6 (HS 5), ave: 6.00. Wkts: 5 (BB 2-33), ave: 46.80. Venkatesh Prasad, 26, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast-medium bowler. Yet to appear in Test cricket, he first played for his country at one-day level in 1993-94. Seams the ball both ways. Played: 21. Runs: 9 (HS 5), ave: 2.25. Wkts: 19 (BB 3-36), ave: 38.42. Saifi Ankoala, 27, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium-pace bowler. His only Test was in 1989; has appeared sporadically at one-day international level. Key element of his bowling is his ability to extract good bounce. Played: 14. Runs: 14 (HS 7), ave: 3.50. Wkts: 11 (BB 3-33), ave: 35.09. ONE TO WATCH: Anil Kumble ODDS: 4-1

Maseko Goniwe (capt), age 26, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. Led his country to a recent double triumph over England, taking the Test series 1-0 and one-day series 6-1. After struggling for runs in the Tests, started to show return to form during limited-overs games. Played in the last World Cup in 1992. Played: 77. Runs: 2,263 (HS 112), ave: 35.92. Wkts: 54 (BB 2-51), ave: 33.33. Andrew Hudson, 30, right-hand batsman. Opener who scored 163 on Test debut in South Africa's first Test against West Indies, in Bridgetown, April 1992. Played: 60. Runs: 1,714 (HS 108), ave: 29.05. Gary Kirsten, 26, left-hand batsman. One of four brothers who have played first-class cricket, opener Kirsten's naturally attacking style can give early impetus to the innings. Made his top score in one-day internationals of 116 in recent series against England. Played: 35. Runs: 1,143 (HS 116), ave: 35.72. Daryll Cullinan, 28, right-hand batsman. Mercantile talent who has yet to reach full potential. Holds record as youngest centurion in first-class cricket in South Africa. Played: 43. Runs: 927 (HS 70), ave: 26.78. Jacques Kallis, 20, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. Another exciting young batting talent with bright future. Made Test debut against England last December. Played: 7. Runs: 166 (HS 67), ave: 27.67. Jonty Rhodes, 26, right-hand batsman. World's finest fielder and a vital member of the limited-overs team. Struggled with batting form during much of the Test and one-day series against England. Played: 3. Runs: 0. Wkts: 4 (BB 3-30), ave: 18.00. Pat Symcox, 35, right-hand batsman, off-spinner. Practical joker of the South African team whose powerful batting down the order enhanced his selection. Has best one-day bowling figures of 3-20 against West Indies in Bombay in 1993-94. Played: 19. Runs: 113 (HS 35), ave: 8.99. Wkts: 18 (BB 3-20), ave: 29.17. ONE TO WATCH: Paul Adams ODDS: 5-1

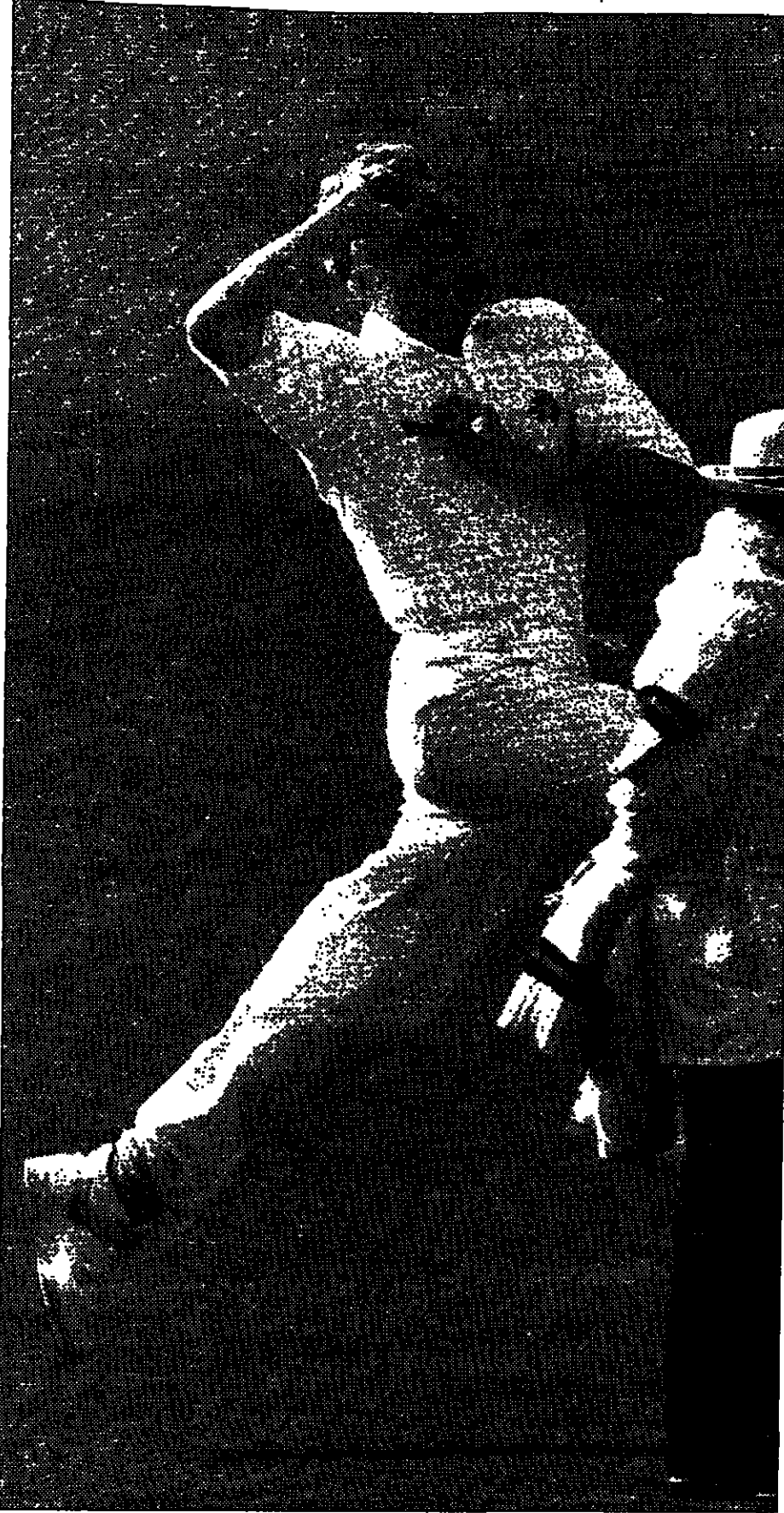
batman, right-arm fast bowler. Emerged in the recent Test and one-day series against England to show he has the makings of a world-class all-rounder. Played: 7. Runs: 96 (HS 66), ave: 32.00. Wkts: 13 (BB 4-34), ave: 16.31. Steve Pattinson, 25, right-hand batsman, wicketkeeper. Won a place after regular bowler Dave Richardson broke a finger. Played: 1. Runs: 10 (HS 10), ave: 10.00. Catches: 1. Allan Donald, 29, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast bowler. South Africa's premier strike bowler, his pace, hostility and accuracy were a key element in the Test series triumph over England. Country's leading one-day wicket-taker. Played: 57. Runs: 34 (HS 7), ave: 4.25. Wkts: 81 (BB 5-29), ave: 25.54. Craig Matthews, 33, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast medium bowler. Consistent line and length make Matthews a vital cog in South Africa's fast bowling armoury. Has scored a first-class century as No. 10 batsman in provincial cricket. Played: 43. Runs: 124 (HS 26), ave: 9.54. Wkts: 66 (BB 3-55), ave: 23.61. Fanie De Villiers, 31, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast medium bowler. Gained a World Cup place after missing most of the current season with a groin injury. Played: 62. Runs: 123 (HS 20), ave: 8.20. Wkts: 67 (BB 3-46), ave: 26.63. Paul Adams, 19, right-hand batsman, left-arm wrist spinner. South Africa's sensational new find with an unorthodox bowling style, Adams is a coloured player who made a stunning rise from schoolboy to Test player in just a few months in the 1995-6 season. Played: 3. Runs: 0. Wkts: 4 (BB 3-30), ave: 18.00. Pat Symcox, 35, right-hand batsman, off-spinner. Practical joker of the South African team whose powerful batting down the order enhanced his selection. Has best one-day bowling figures of 3-20 against West Indies in Bombay in 1993-94. Played: 19. Runs: 113 (HS 35), ave: 8.99. Wkts: 18 (BB 3-20), ave: 29.17. ONE TO WATCH: Paul Adams ODDS: 5-1



CRICKET: THE SIXTH WORLD CUP

England's own 'Digger' with the heart to make a deeper impact

Mike Selvey on Peter Martin, the Lancashire bowler who has made giant strides into the international game in nine months



High ambition... hard work has raised Martin's sights and aggression. TOM JENKINS

LORD Ted were still in charge he might have employed his "Malcolm Devon" dyslexia, confirmed him as Martin Peters told us he was 10 years ahead of his time.

But "Digger" Martin (unusually for an England cricketer these days the nickname comes not from an Australian upbringing but is a reference to Cliff Brasted's alcoholic father in Dallas and an incident with a bottle of Bailey's is very much a cricketer for today, an integral part of England's World Cup effort and one of the few players to emerge from the tour of South Africa with reputation not just intact but enhanced.

A year ago he was, by most estimations, a journeyman fast-medium pace bowler doing his bit for Lancashire, cursing his luck but unable to indulge in the massive infusion of self-belief that helps elevate the county cricketer to the next level.

Yet such has been Martin's progress that in only nine months he has played half-a-dozen Test matches and seven one-day internationals. He still speaks in amazed tones of the change in his fortunes. "It's been weird... I wouldn't have said that at 26 I had given up hope of playing for England but there was no way that I thought the chance was so great."

Martin believes his name emerged when, at the right time, with the selectors looking for another bowler, he produced some exemplary figures in a high-scoring Benson and Hedges Cup match. "I've always bowled well in those sort of games, plugging away, not going for too many, picking up a couple of wickets at the start, doing all right at the death, and it helps doing that when the England captain is there. But even then people had been going on about my county colleague Glen Chappell, who had had some exceptional A tours but was tired and certainly not bowling as well as I was."

The thought that he might get a chance had still not crossed his mind, however. "I was a bit nervous about the West Indies series with Lancashire's wicket-

keeper Warren Hegg. "He kept out of his depth. I was very nervous beforehand, I'd got a sore heel and I thought if I bowled like a trait, the crowd are going to think 'what's going on, who is this bloke?' Instead I slipped into a rhythm, it went well and I got away with it because it felt like my foot was hanging off. Since then I've been OK."

The tour that has been the making of him almost did not happen. Instead of being selected for South Africa he was perilled in for the A tour to Pakistan, and his place went instead to Richard Johnson. "I was a bit pissed off to tell the truth," says Martin, "because I honestly thought I'd shown enough po-

confidence that he was not out of his depth. "I was very nervous beforehand, I'd got a sore heel and I thought if I bowled like a trait, the crowd are going to think 'what's going on, who is this bloke?' Instead I slipped into a rhythm, it went well and I got away with it because it felt like my foot was hanging off. Since then I've been OK."

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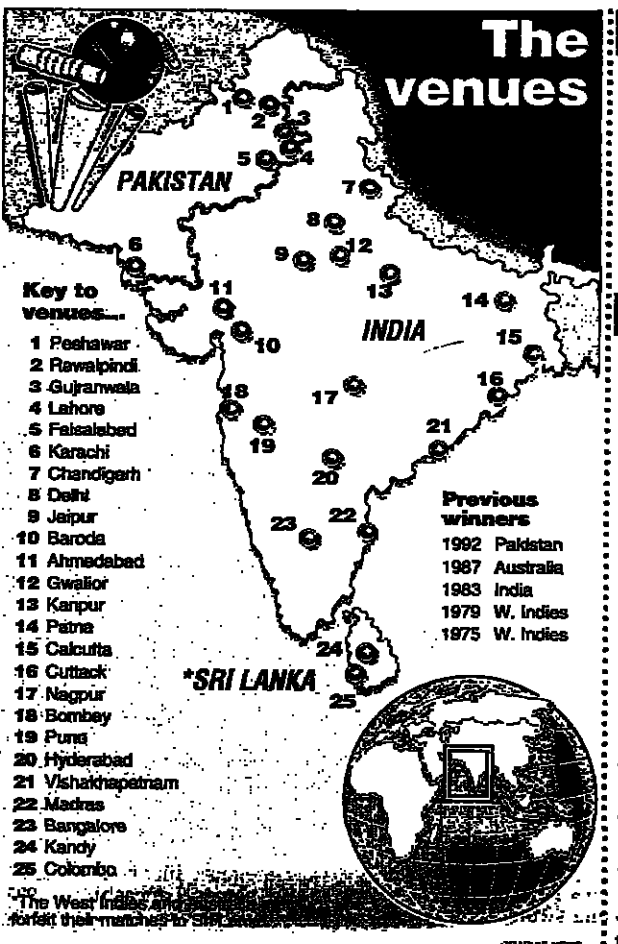
potential in the Tests to give me a go. But Athers explained that he didn't want me and Gus Fraser in the same side, and that my strike rate about 2.5 wickets a match on average — needed improving. I accepted it. I realise now I should have stamped my authority on the game more."

Johnson's back injury meant Martin ended up in South Africa and, after missing out on the first two Tests, he was brought into the side in Durban after some excellent performances in the peripheral matches — particularly on the moribund pitch in Paarl where, from somewhere (6ft 7in is a good start) he found bounce and movement. That, and sturdy, enthusiastic net sessions, kept him in the side for the rest of the series.

But with a good toehold, Martin has to improve his

ability to take wickets to retain his position. When he burst on the scene, his bowling was predictable, with the away swing ball coming early from a slightly low arm and not counterbalanced by any more subtle tactical variation than simply a ball pushed in on the angle. Since then, with the help of Peter Lever, who has coached him since he was 18, he has added a yard of pace, hits the deck harder, zips the ball around later, becoming more aggressive and positive in his self-belief. With more hard work, and a decent inswinger, he could become an exceptional international bowler.

But the World Cup is not the time to become fancy. "I know there are a few things to think about and tinker with," he says "but for the moment I am going to go with what I have."



The groups

Group A	Group B
England	Australia
Holland	India
New Zealand	Kenya
Pakistan	Sri Lanka
South Africa	West Indies
United Arab Emirates	Zimbabwe

Matches will consist of one innings per side, limited to 50 overs. The top two teams in each group will go on to the quarter-finals.

The schedule

February	Venue	29 Pakistan v S. Africa	6
11 Opening ceremony	15	W. Indies v Kenya	19
14 England v N. Zealand	11		
15 S. Africa v UAE	2	1 Australia v Zimbabwe	17
16 W. Indies v Zimbabwe	20	Holland v UAE	4
17 Sri Lanka v Australia	25	2 India v Sri Lanka	8
Holland v N. Zealand	10	3 Pakistan v England	6
18 England v UAE	1	4 W. Indies v Australia	9
India v Kenya	16	5 S. Africa v Holland	2
20 S. Africa v N. Zealand	5	6 India v Zimbabwe	13
21 India v W. Indies	12	Pakistan v N. Zealand	4
Sri Lanka v Zimbabwe	25	Sri Lanka v Kenya	24
22 England v Holland	1	Quarter-finals	
23 Australia v Kenya	21	9 A1 v B4	5
24 Pakistan v UAE	3	A3 v B2	23
25 England v S. Africa	2	11 B1 v A4	6
Sri Lanka v W. Indies	25	B3 v A2	22
26 Pakistan v Holland	4	13 First semi-final	15
Zimbabwe v Kenya	14	14 Second semi-final	7
27 India v Australia	15	17 Final	4
N. Zealand v UAE	12	18 (Reserve day)	

West Indies

BRIAN LARA has restated his admiration for the West Indian side in writing, since ending his self-imposed exile from international cricket, but it is questionable whether many spectators will be so impressed. Without a World Cup win since their successes in England in 1975 and 1979, there are few prospects of improvement here in 1996.

Richardson's authority as captain continues to be weakened by his batting failures. Hooper's withdrawal through illness is a massive all-round blow, and an ageing pace attack will not welcome a draining itinerary. Unless Lara maintains exalted heights, it is difficult to see West Indies surviving past the quarter-finals.

- Richie Richardson** (capt), age 34, right-hand batsman. At his best, a brilliant stroke-maker capable of taking heavy toll of the world's best bowlers but over past two years has lacked consistency. Appointed captain after Viv Richards stepped down in 1991; has recently come under fire from critics for his lack of firm leadership. Played: 218. Runs: 6,012 (HS 122), ave: 32.85.
- Sherwin Campbell**, 25, right-hand batsman. An operator of great potential, he blossomed during the 1995 Test series in England, making an excellent 93 at Lord's. Agile close fielder. Played: 22. Runs: 553 (HS 86), ave: 25.13.
- Brian Lara**, 26, left-hand batsman. Holder of world records for the highest score in Test (375) and first-class cricket (501), his sublime batsmanship makes him the game's biggest draw-card. Made a late withdrawal from tour of Australia. Squad's hopes rest largely on his shoulders. Played: 92. Runs: 3,702 (HS 169), ave: 44.07.
- Jimmy Adams**, 28, left-hand batsman, left-arm spinner. Gritty performer since Test debut in 1992. Touched peak batting form on 1994 tour of India but did little of note in England last year. Change bowler; stand-by wicketkeeper. Played: 18. Runs: 893 (HS 81), ave: 27.72. Wkts: 2 (BB 1-2), ave: 29.50.
- Keith Arthurton**, 31, dogged left-hand middle-order batsman; brilliant fielder. Debut in 1988, but inconsistent in Tests. Dropped for Sharjah and World Series one-dayers. Played: 81. Runs: 1,651 (HS 84), ave: 29.48. Wkts: 21 (BB 3-1), ave: 26.38.
- Shivnarine Chanderpaul**, 21, left-hand batsman. After prolific scoring in youth cricket he was thrust into 1994 home Test series against England and World Series one-dayers. Played: 18. Runs: 443 (HS 77), ave: 29.53.
- roland Holder**, 28, right-hand batsman. Unlucky to miss out on a Test place so far. Chosen as replacement when Lara pulled out of Australia tour. Played: 18. Runs: 331 (HS: 50), ave: 27.58.
- Ottis Gibson**, 26, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast me-

England

WITH three losing finals in five World Cups — the last of them in Melbourne almost four years ago — England has been on the back of a tired 6-1 drubbing by South Africa last month that perhaps was not a true reflection of their ability. With a following wind they are capable of taking the trophy. The strength of the side is in the batting which, despite a dismal one-day series in South Africa, potentially is as strong as any in the competition.

The key to it all, perhaps, is Graeme Hick who might prove the batsman of the tournament. The bowling, however, is merely adequate and an expedient if emotive decision will have to be made as to whether Alec Stewart keeps wicket in place of Jack Russell in order to accommodate an extra bowler.

- Mike Atherton** (capt), age 27, right-hand batsman. Since being appointed captain in August 1993 his batting has thrived on the responsibility. Can play positively in limited-overs matches and hit 92 and 127 against West Indies in 1995 one-day series in England. Played: 31. Runs: 1,214 (HS 127), ave: 41.86.
- Alec Stewart**, 32, right-hand batsman/wicketkeeper. Operator and lovely timer of the ball whose instinctive attacking style makes him ideally suited to give a one-day innings a flying start. Played: 68. Runs: 1,796 (HS 103), ave: 30.96. Catches: 55. Stumpings: 4.
- Graham Thorpe**, 26, left-hand batsman. Good temperament and, with an improved technique, became England's most reliable performer until his modest tour of South Africa. Naturally aggressive middle-order batsman. Played: 19. Runs: 596 (HS 88), ave: 32.45.
- Graeme Hick**, 29, right-hand batsman. Effective took four years to establish his Test place after 1991 debut, with poor technique against short-pitched fast bowling his Achilles heel. But has proved a punishing batsman at international one-day level. Played: 54. Runs: 1,770 (HS 105), ave: 37.65. Wkts: 15 (BB 3-1), ave: 38.46.
- Robin Smith**, 32, right-hand batsman. Courageous player of hostile fast bowling but has had to re-establish his England place after left cheekbone was fractured by a lifting ball from Ian Bishop last year. Played: 69. Runs: 2,319 (HS 167), ave: 38.65.
- Neil Fairbrother**, 32, left-hand batsman. Resourceful stroke-maker, nimble runner between wickets and rapid scorer. Outstanding fielder. Played: 51. Runs: 1,451 (HS 113), ave: 38.18.
- Jack Russell**, 32, wicket-keeper, left-hand batsman. Since taking over the Gloucestershire captaincy last year, his batting has grown in stature at domestic and Test level. High-class behind the stumps. Played: 31. Runs: 354 (HS 50), ave: 20.82. Catches: 32. Stumpings: 5.
- Craig White**, 26, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium-

England

pace bowler. Secured a place largely on the strength of his bowling in the one-day matches in South Africa. Played: 8. Runs: 100 (HS 34), ave: 14.28. Wkts: 8 (BB 2-16), ave: 30.37.
- Dominic Cork**, 24, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast-medium bowler. Vibrant, thinking cricketer always keen to work at improving his game. Played: 14. Runs: 58 (HS 21), ave: 28.95.
- Phillip DeFreitas**, 30, right-hand batsman, right-arm medium-pace bowler. An uneven performer in Tests, particularly overseas, he reminded England of a genuine spinner as an accurate and economical bowler playing against them for Boland. Played: 97. Runs: 601 (HS 49), ave: 14.65. Wkts: 109 (BB 4-35), ave: 34.63.
- Darren Gough**, 25, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast-medium bowler. Burst on to the Test scene like a breath of fresh air in 1994 but his progress was held back by a stress fracture of the left foot during the 1994-95 tour of Australia. Played: 16. Runs: 93 (HS 45), ave: 10.33. Wkts: 28 (BB 5-44), ave: 19.97.
- Peter Martin**, 27, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast-medium bowler. Made an impressive debut in the one-day internationals against West Indies last year when he swung the ball effectively. Played: 7. Runs: 21 (HS 9), ave: 21.00. Wkts: 13 (BB 2-23), ave: 51.42.
- Richard Illingworth**, 32, right-hand batsman, left-arm spinner. Cast off his image as a defensive slow bowler when he was recalled after a four-year absence to the Test side against West Indies last year. Played: 21. Runs: 64 (HS 14), ave: 10.66. Wkts: 26 (BB 3-33), ave: 34.03.
- Neil Smith**, 28, right-hand batsman, off-spinner. Took two wickets and scored three runs in the two one-day internationals he played in South Africa but produced effective all-round performances in limited-overs cricket for Warwickshire. Played: 2. Runs: 3 (HS 3), ave: 3.00. Wkts: 2 (BB 2-48), ave: 27.50.
- ONE TO WATCH: Graeme Hick** ODDS: 8-1

Sri Lanka

SRI LANKA's receding prospects cannot be considered without considerable sadness. A breezy if impulsive one-day batting side — the strongest in the group stages — was particularly from their wicketkeeper and opening batsman Kaluwitharana. But the sense of loss and betrayal in the wake of the terrorist bomb in Colombo is considerable. Additionally, a key bowler, Muralitharan, is still undermined by allegations of throwing during the recent tour of Australia.

Unless the International Cricket Council can find a miraculous solution, Sri Lanka, a good outside bet a few months ago, face further depression.

- Arjuna Ranatunga** (capt), age 32, left-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. One of the most experienced players in the World Cup who is appearing in his fourth tournament. Attacking left-hand bat and useful one-day bowler with deceptive medium pace. Played: 178. Runs: 4,913 (HS 102), ave: 35.06. Wkts: 74 (BB 4-14), ave: 47.78.
- Aravinda De Silva**, 30, right-hand batsman, off-spinner. Enjoyed a superb debut season in county cricket with Kent last year. Steady one-day bowler. Played: 175. Runs: 4,825 (HS 107), ave: 31.80. Wkts: 45 (BB 3-56), ave: 43.00.
- Sanath Jayasuriya**, 26, left-hand batsman, right-arm fast-medium bowler. Aggressive batsman and excellent fielder in any position. Relishes the one-day game and will probably open the batting. Played: 98. Runs: 1,776 (HS 140), ave: 19.73. Wkts: 71 (BB 6-29), ave: 34.71.
- Asanika Gurusinha**, 29, left-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. Another very experienced player who is a steady bat in the vital No. 3 spot. Bowls useful medium pace. Played: 128. Runs: 3,345 (HS 117), ave: 27.64. Wkts: 26 (BB 2-23), ave: 51.42.
- Mashan Tillekeratne**, 29, left-hand batsman. Stylish bat with brilliant close fielder with ability to keep wicket. The most consistent Sri Lankan performer in recent years, Tillekeratne, although batting at No. 6, has the highest Test batting average among the side of 40.
- Played: 122. Runs: 2,334 (HS 104), ave: 28.83. Catches: 57. Stumpings: 5.**
- Roshan Mahanama**, 29, right-hand batsman. Elegant opener who is playing in his second World Cup. Excellent fielder. Played: 135. Runs: 3,565 (HS 119), ave: 29.95.
- Mavran Attapattis**, 24, right-hand batsman. Stylish player who has been in prolific form in domestic games but unable to sustain his obvious talent at international level. Good fielder. Played: 7. Runs: 43 (HS 19), ave: 10.75.
- ONE TO WATCH: Roshan Mahanama** ODDS: 6-1

Sri Lanka

pace bowler. Secured a place largely on the strength of his bowling in the one-day matches in South Africa. Played: 8. Runs: 100 (HS 34), ave: 14.28. Wkts: 8 (BB 2-16), ave: 30.37.
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The outsiders

BRILLIANT innovative tactics and inspirational batting from Martin Crowe made the Kiwis the surprise package in the last World Cup. But Crowe has gone, and following some controversial times recently, a resolute clear-out by the team coach Glenn Turner leaves the side with a squad that at best is enthusiastic. Enthusiasm can work wonders, however, and a 2-2 draw in a recent four-match series with Pakistan shows that New Zealand are not to be taken lightly. They are led by an astute captain in Lee Germon — inexperienced at international level but highly respected in provincial cricket — and carry a plethora of bats-and-pieces players ideally suited to slow pitches and the one-day format. Weak batting and a lack of genuine international class — Chris Cairns a notable exception — will count against them. Destined to be irritants. One to watch: Chris Cairns. Odds: 28-1.

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Holland

GIVEN that in recent years they have beaten South Africa, West Indies, England and Australia A, and managed to rack up 267 against Northamptonshire in last year's NatWest Trophy before losing by seven wickets, the Dutch, a cosmopolitan lot, could be extremely loose cannons. Much of their credibility depends on the performance of two imported opening batsmen, the Bajaj Noman Clarke — at 47 the oldest man in the tournament — and Peter Cantrell from Queensland. Clarke, who made 159 for Barbados against Mike Denness's team 25 years ago, is still sufficiently adept to have been the leading hitter of sizes in the 1994 Hong Kong Sixes tournament, while Cantrell played for his former state against England in 1991. The attack features Glamorgan's Roland Lefflore, and Paul Jan 'Nip' Bakker, the first Dutchman to play county cricket and Hampshire's leading wicket taker in 1989. One to watch: Nolan Clarke. Odds: 1,000-1

Kenya

IF any of the three non-Test nations is capable of pulling off a surprise, it is Kenya. They sampled Asian conditions in Bangladesh last year and recently overcame an Indian A touring team, including five Test players, at one-day level. In Steve Tikolo, a professional with Border in South Africa, they have a batsman to be reckoned with. But Kenya's preparations have been fraught. Financial squabbles, an apparent lack of equipment (when they requested, the red balls, the players received red ones painted white) and racial jealousies between the eight black Kenyans and six players of Indian origin have all upset preparations. They still might just do something startling. One to watch: Steve Tikolo. Odds: 2,000-1.

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Zimbabwe

EXPECT Zimbabwe to become the only Test nation to fail to qualify for the quarter-finals, especially now that Dave Houghton's last opportunity before his retirement to gain recognition as a world-class batsman has been lost through injury. Zimbabwe will undoubtedly field brilliantly, Heath Streak has all-round ability and the former brothers are a well-drilled opening pair, with a fine understanding between the wickets. Weak batting elsewhere are considerable. A breakthrough for Olovo would invigorate Zimbabwe's efforts to widen its largely white base. But the fast bowler was called for throwing on his Test debut and represents the riskiest of selections. One to watch: Henry Olonga. Odds: 200-1.

United Arab Emirates

CHANGES to ICC qualification rules mean that this could be the first and last World Cup appearance by an Emirates side for some while. They qualified for the competition by winning the ICC Trophy but, along with Kenya, Holland and Zimbabwe, are not expected to qualify for the quarter-finals. With the captain Sultan Zarewani the only UAE national, the squad consists almost entirely of expat former first-class cricketers from the sub-continent who had migrated to the Gulf in search of employment. They have prepared diligently but suffered a setback when the former Indian pace bowler Madan Lal, who helped them qualify, quit after the Emirates Cricket Board had failed to offer him a long-term contract. Hopes of an upset appear to rest largely on the all-round skills of Saleem Raza, who has played limited-overs cricket for Pakistan, and Mazhar Hussain, who toured with Pakistan B a decade ago. One to watch: Saleem Raza. Odds: 2,000-1. Assessments: Mike Selvey, David Hoppis. Statistics: Reuter

CRICKET: Nation-by-nation guide to the sixth World Cup, pages 10-11
SOCCER: Manchester United sign £65 million sponsorship deal, page 9

SportsGuardian

World Cup set for crisis D-day

Neil Robinson

CRICKET'S World Cup will be launched amid a blaze of colour and light in Calcutta tomorrow night when 10,000 policemen, sniffer dogs and bomb detectors will also be on hand to ensure that the opening ceremony does not add to the tournament's catalogue of woes.

The cup omens are not good. Australia's squad left Sydney yesterday insisting that they would not change their mind and compete in Sri Lanka. West Indies have adopted a similar standpoint while the organisers Pileom are adamant that no games will be rescheduled.

"They [the Australians and West Indies] should not expect any concessions. We have offered them what we could do. Sri Lanka has said they can host the matches and provide adequate security and we have no reason to doubt their word," said Pileom's convenor secretary Jagmohan Dalmiya.

Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar sought to defuse tension yesterday by sending a bouquet of flowers to his Australian counterpart, while in India the ICC chairman Sir Clyde Walcott and chief executive David Richards met Pileom officials. Although no breakthrough was made Sir Clyde said he had a "number of options in mind" when discussions resume with a meeting between representatives of all the teams today.

Unless he succeeds Sri Lanka will be virtually guaranteed a quarter-final place before a ball is bowled. There was more bad news for the organisers yesterday when an 84-tonne crane being used to install floodlights in Bombay's main stadium toppled over and damaged the outfield. The impact left a huge crater and pools of oil on the ground but the pitch was not damaged and India's game against Australia will still go ahead there on February 27.

Tomorrow all eyes will be focused on Eden Gardens, Calcutta, where all 12 teams will take their place on a 30ft stage before 100,000 spectators and beneath what is promised to be a dazzling laser show.

DO SOCCER CLUBS PRACTISE RACIST STEREOTYPING?



Out in the cold... young Asians above Bradford City's Valley Parade stadium, where Britain's only Asian professional plays

MICHAEL STEELE

'Asians can't play' barrier

Vivek Chaudhary on a new report which claims talented young footballers are being ignored because of their ethnic background

BRITISH Asian footballers represent a large pool of untapped domestic talent but their progress is hampered by racial stereotyping and the current vogue for foreign players.

The claim is made in Asians Can't Play Football, a forthcoming report of the first comprehensive survey of British Asian footballers and the professional game's attitude towards them. Compiled by Jas Bains and Raj Patel of the Midland Asian Sports Forum, the report is backed by the Football Association, the Premier League and the Professional Footballers' Association.

It states that soccer is the most popular sport among

young Asians, even though there is only one Asian professional in the league at the moment - Chris Dolby of Bradford City - and concludes: "There is a strong argument for suggesting that Asian players are a large, untapped pool of domestic footballing talent."

"At a time when an alleged dearth of English-born talent is forcing clubs to search for foreign markets, and the professional game bemoans the lack of domestic talent... it may prove useful to consider the value of a programme that may unearth hidden talent on our doorstep."

Sixty-one of the 92 senior league clubs in England and Wales took part in the survey, which took more than a year to compile and involved interviews with Asian footballers, officials of professional football clubs, sports teachers and youth development officers.

Only five clubs, all below First Division status, reported having had an Asian player on their full-time professional staff. No fewer than

69 per cent of professional football club officials questioned believe that Asian footballers are physically inferior to other footballers, and 40 per cent said the Asian footballers lacked the necessary talent.

Half the clubs questioned said cultural differences like religion and language explained the absence of Asians from the professional game. Some officials even stated that the diet of Asian players prevented them from competing at a professional level.

"There is no doubt in our opinion that the process of negative stereotyping has prevented the breakthrough into professional football of a significant number of Asian footballers," states Bains. "If clubs are referring to physical inferiority or diet then one wonders, for example, how size figured in the transfer of Juninho to Middlesbrough."

The survey, which involved interviews with more than 200 Asian footballers, found that 86 per cent of them play at least once a week and more

than half have been playing since junior school. Just over 94 per cent said they encountered racism while playing football. More than half said they believed they had the ability to compete at some level of the professional game.

The report does acknowledge that one of the would-be Asian professionals' biggest obstacles is the attitude of their parents. More than half admitted that their parents actively discouraged them from professional soccer, either for fear of injury or by preferring them to concentrate on studies. Almost 60 per cent said their parents were unable to comprehend their sons' enthusiasm for the game.

The experiences of Asian apprentices at professional football clubs were that more than 80 per cent felt their parents had been a negative influence. Almost all said they had encountered racism at their clubs.

The report calls for a comprehensive strategy between the professional game and the Asian community to try to tackle the shortage of professional Asian players. It says that football clubs must accept a degree of responsibility

and should attempt to establish closer links with the Asian community. Scouts should start attending matches involving Asian teams and more effort is needed to eradicate racist behaviour at all levels of the game.

The report also states that, while there is a significant number of Asian adult teams, more emphasis needs to be placed on developing boys' teams and that the community itself should give more encouragement to potential professionals.

The final word, perhaps, should come from the professional game: "They lack bottle, are no good in the mud and have no stamina." Is this a reference to Asian players? In fact those comments were made in the 1970s by 12 First Division managers - about black players.

Meaning lost at Uefa's open door



David Lacey

EVERYBODY has won and all must have prizes. The Dodo's solution to the chaos race is now to be applied in European football because none of the powerful clubs can afford to be losers.

So the Champions' Cup will be thrown open to non-champions and in order to compete in the Cup Winners' Cup it will no longer be necessary to win a national cup first. Any riderless horses will be rounded up to compete in an ever-expanding Uefa Cup which, with its intricate connections, has already been reduced to selling-plate status.

From a footballing point of view it is hard to cavil at the prospect of 10 English clubs being able to compete in the European tournaments. The more foreign competition English sides get the better. But what sort of tournaments will they be competing in? The European Cup was once the world's foremost club competition, challenged only by the South American Copa de Los Libertadores. Now it has become a mere cash machine for the major clubs of western Europe and the television companies that screen their matches.

Gabriel Hanot, a former French international who covered football for L'Equipe, dreamed up the Champions Cup as a showcase for the best of the European club game could offer. Sir Stanley Rous, the secretary of the FA and later president of Fifa, saw in the Inter-Cities Fairs (later Uefa) Cup a forerunner of a European league.

At this week's Geneva summit Uefa and the representatives of the leading clubs managed to reject the league idea while continuing to seek the safeguards a league might bring. So what is left of Hanot's ideal will shortly be reduced to an ungainly hybrid, with the champions of eight major football nations

joined by fellow clubs with the best domestic records over a specified period yet to be fixed.

Those who argue that the Champions' Cup will not be devalued as a result have mislaid their sense of values. Even the practice of allowing European Cup winners automatic entry to the following season's tournament was dubious. Bayern Munich, for example, retained the trophy in 1975 while finishing 10th out of 18 in the Bundesliga.

It is strange but Uefa seems to suffer these upheavals whenever a major club has blown it. Milan failed to win the Italian championship last season and lost to Ajax in the European Cup final. San Siro regards the Uefa Cup as something to put flowers in and so, lo and behold, a system is devised whereby Milan are virtually assured a Champions League place every year.

A SITUATION has been reached in which the biggest clubs pay their players so much, and the leading television companies are so dependent for ratings on the success of their respective teams, that neither can risk the sudden exits which are the very essence of cup football.

It would surely be more honest now to set up a proper television-based European league. Those finishing bottom would be relegated only if another team promised higher ratings.

Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal, Newcastle and Rangers would join the likes of Milan, Juventus, Bayern Munich, Paris St-Germain, Ajax, Anderlecht, Real Madrid, Barcelona, Benfica, Porto and any leading club from eastern Europe that had not sold its best players.

European football has lost all sense of balance between east and west. A fine Spartak Moscow team has seen its assets stripped after qualifying with distinction for the Champions' Cup quarter-finals. Money rules.

After Bosman the game in the west is even more likely to be dominated by multinational sets of mercenaries. Puskas and Di Stefano were not Spanish but they did enhance the grandeur of Real Madrid, as did the Dutch trio at Milan. For Van Basten read Weah but the latter's cynical abandonment of his allegiance to PSG last season, even as he played against Milan in the Champions' Cup semi-finals, was a sad sign of the times.

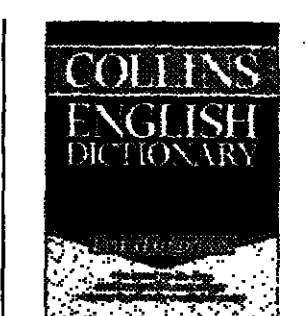
Advertisement for 'LESS to pay' featuring interest rates of 10.5%, 11.9%, and 12.9% APR. Includes a table with columns for Loan Value, APR, Example Monthly Repayment, and 15, 30, and 45 year terms. Contact number 0800 908927.

Advertisement for 'Asians in football' featuring a pie chart showing reasons why families actively discouraged play: Fear/experience of racism (16.4%), Ignorance of football (19.0%), Religious issues (6.6%), Focus on business (3.9%), Fear of injury (25.6%), and Focus on studies (28.5%).

Advertisement for 'OUR GENIE CAN CONJURE UP 16,000 VIDEO TITLES IN A FLASH.' Promoting Video Plus Direct, a video mail order service. Includes contact information for Peterborough PE2 6BR.

Guardian COLLINS Crossword 20,572

A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to Guardian Crossword No 20,572, Reference Marketing, Harper Collins Publishing, 77-85 Fulham Palace Road, London, W6 8JF, by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday, February 19.



Crossword puzzle grid with clues. Across clues include: 1. Riding a donkey is Aristotle (7); 5. Mum's getting old, result of successful action (7); 9. Universal whip-round for children's complaint (5); 10. Abduction of the very attractive? (8); 11. Lowland bird and English rose embracing - not for long (5,9); 13. Bad word for coat-hanger (4); 14. Marks re-taken from magistrate when upset (8); 17. 'Do you come here often?' (8).

Down clues for the crossword puzzle: 2. Then I'll get the girl, Greta Garbo - touche end, sadly (4,6,3,6); 3. S-superior repeat (6); 4. Fringe county? (6); 5. Appeal to electors around the City for birds' home (8); 6. Communication about turn in house and grounds (8); 7. Tried successfully to stay improper payment in trade union (8,2,7); 8. Fond old man starts dying under lake in South of France (5,5); 12. Told secret of trick? (10); 15. Aid for foreign film: that's what's cunning about it (8); 16. Batsman's 11 with bowler? (2-3-3); 19. Firm responsible for Dracula (6); 20. Believer in sole revelation among thousands (6); 22. A single night's depression (4).

Handwritten Arabic text at the bottom of the page.

The Guardian
Outlook

13
Saturday February 10
1996

Sir Richard Scott talks to RICHARD NORTON-TAYLOR about the Government whispering campaign against his report on arms to Iraq, out next week. Below GEOFFREY ROBERTSON argues for the scandal to be used to prise open Whitehall

Worms turn on Scott

A MARK of Whitehall's desperation as it awaits next week's excoriating report on the arms-to-Iraq scandal is the utterly trivial and insidious nature of some aspects of its campaign against the author. Sir Richard Scott cycles to work; that shows how eccentric, how puritanical, how over-virtuous he is, say his detractors. Sir Richard sits with a mixture of irritation and bemusement. His practice of cycling to work is "entirely pragmatic", he explains. You don't have to travel in the Underground, "to stand like veal calves in a crate". You don't have to wait around for buses, or time exactly each stage of your journey to catch the train. He mentions other judges who cycle to their chambers — the law lord, Lord Woolf, the Appeal Court judge, Leonard Hoffmann, and the High Court judge, Stephen Sedley.

mend that never again in criminal cases should ministers be allowed to sign Public Interest Immunity certificates — so-called gagging orders — in the blanket way they did in the Matrix case, where they did not even bother to read the documents they attempted to suppress to see whether they were relevant to the defence. Sir Richard is also likely to conclude that Parliament was consistently misled. The key question is whether he believes MPs were deliberately misled by ministers, an offence which John Major has said is a resigning matter. The judge was coy in an interview with the Guardian yesterday, suggesting only that the public had benefited from a "searchlight" on a part of government. "The allegations which were being investigated were of alleged

the past three years by the growing number of ministers and civil servants who have reason to regret the decision. One view is that Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, was so concerned about the charges levelled against government lawyers during the Matrix Churchill arms-to-Iraq trial whose collapse in November 1992 led to the setting up of the Scott inquiry — that he was determined to recommend a judge who would fearlessly go to the heart of the problem. Asked, as he always is, why he was chosen for the task, Sir Richard says: "Up to a point I don't." A judge was needed since only a judge, not a former official or minister, would be seen to be independent. Since matters of "high policy" were involved, a senior judge had to be chosen. He was picked.

Sir Richard Rashleigh Folliott Scott was born 61 years ago in Debra Dun, in the foothills of the Himalayas where his father, an accomplished horseman, was a colonel in the 2/9th Gurkha Rifles. Sir Richard spent his early years on the North West frontier in the twilight of the Raj before his father was invalided out of the Indian Army in 1942. His parents moved to South Africa, to a 500-acre farm on the Mooi river in Natal. He was educated at Michaelhouse, modelled on an English public school. There he excelled both academically and at sport, including boxing, sprinting and rugby. He went on to read law at Cape Town University and in 1965 won a Commonwealth scholarship to Cambridge, where he was awarded first class honours. He also won a rugby blue as a wing forward in the 1957 varsity match against Oxford.

Sir Richard then won a fellowship to Chicago University. There he met his wife, Rima Rigoll, a New York-born Panamanian studying at nearby university and an accomplished flamenco dancer. He returned to Britain where he was qualified to practice at the Bar. "I had to earn my living," he says. He had no "great life plan", he describes his early life as an example of the "theory of drift". He was elected chairman of the Bar in 1983, where he encouraged steps to be taken to monitor the lack of advancement of black barristers. The following year, he was appointed a Chancery judge where he was admired — especially on the northern circuit — for his straight-talking. It is a quality he admires in others

A picture has been painted of a judge with delusions of grandeur, of a cavalier disregard for procedures

misdemeanour by public officials of what they had done in actions of government and government is conducted on behalf of the public. It is not the first time Sir Richard has upset the Whitehall establishment. In 1987, he roundly dismissed the Government's attempts to prevent the press from publishing the contents of Spycatcher, the memoirs of the former MI5 agent, Peter Wright. "The ability of the press freely to report allegations of scandals in government is one of the bulwarks of our democratic society," he said. "The importance to the public of this country of the allegation that members of MI5 endeavoured to undermine and destroy public confidence in an elected government makes the public the proper recipient of the information."

It is a judgement anxious Whitehall officials awaiting his report this week might not wish to be reminded about. The context is different, but the themes of secrecy, of the Government-knows-best approach are the same. Why John Major appointed Sir Richard, a judge with a reputation for rigorous independence, to conduct the inquiry is a question that has been asked repeatedly over

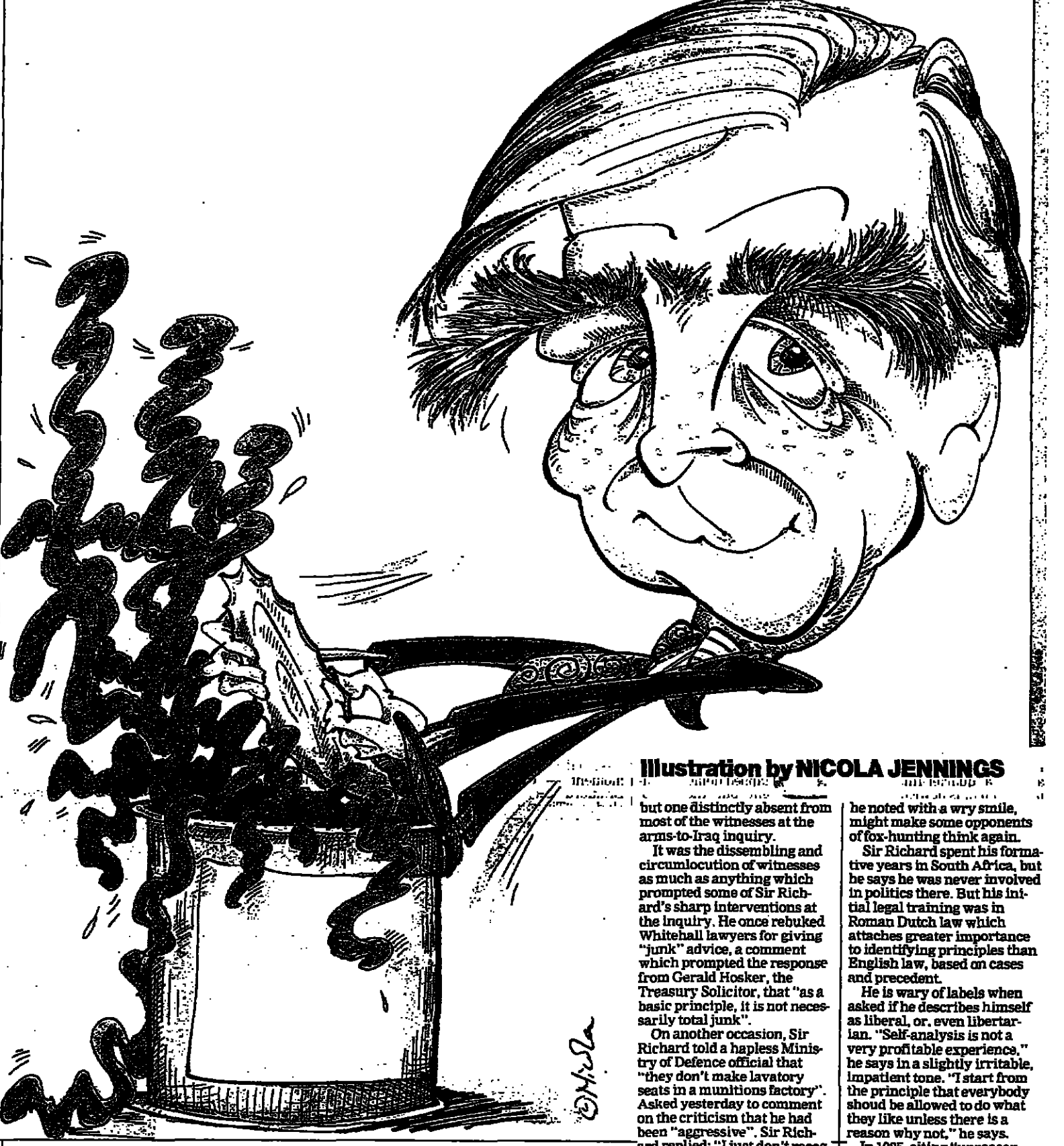


Illustration by NICOLA JENNINGS

but one distinctly absent from most of the witnesses at the arms-to-Iraq inquiry. It was the dissembling and circumlocution of witnesses as much as anything which prompted some of Sir Richard's sharp interventions at the inquiry. He once rebuked Whitehall lawyers for giving "junk" advice, a comment which prompted the response from Gerald Hosker, the Treasury Solicitor, that "as a basic principle, it is not necessarily total junk". On another occasion, Sir Richard told a hapless Ministry of Defence official that "they don't make lavatory seats in a munitions factory". Asked yesterday to comment on the criticism that he had been "aggressive", Sir Richard replied: "I just don't recognise that as an apt epithet."

He noted with a wry smile, might make some opponents of hunting think again. Sir Richard spent his formative years in South Africa, but he says he was never involved in politics there. But his initial legal training was in Roman Dutch law which attaches greater importance to identifying principles than English law, based on cases and precedent. He is wary of labels when asked if he describes himself as liberal, or even libertarian. "Self-analysis is not a very profitable experience," he says in a slightly irritable, impatient tone. "I start from the principle that everybody should be allowed to do what they like unless there is a reason why not," he says. In 1985, citing "unreasonable harassment," he granted a group of South Wales working miners an injunction stopping mass-picketing by NUM officials. "It seemed to me if those people wanted to go to work they should be allowed to work without being subjected to a barrage of insults and so forth," he said. He is wary, too, of establishing a right of privacy in statute. He says legislation would be too rigid; judge-made law should be allowed to develop responding to "changing requirements and opinions of the age". Sir Richard, meanwhile, has finished a task which will remain on Whitehall's conscience for many years. It was based on evidence which slowly emerged from 200,000 pages of official documents. It was "like peeling an onion", he said. The result is certain to lead to tears.

Secret state can no longer be allowed to hide and slide

LORD Justice Scott is now being subjected to the very same process which produced the arms-to-Iraq scandal in the first place: a culture within government which requires inconvenient truths to be distorted or suppressed for the better avoidance of what Whitehall terms "presentational difficulties". His report will be judged by the remedy it prescribes for this disease in the body politic. It does not actually matter, in the long term, who gets Scott's brickbats or bouquets: public office will always attract politicians prone to hypocrisy, just as the public service will have its share of lickspittles. What matters is to have in place a system of government within which those temptations are deterred: by exposure and by public condemnation. What the Scott report will detail is a systems failure in modern Westminster democracy. The "Howe Guidelines" of 1985, declaring an embargo on arms-related sales to Iran and Iraq,

were an exercise in moral superiority. They soon became unworkable, and were gradually abandoned, in the "tilt to Iraq" years leading up to Saddam's invasion of Kuwait. Why, Scott will ask, were these politically important changes not merely kept secret but actively misrepresented, so fervently that Parliament and the courts were repeatedly misled? One positive feature of Whitehall is its internal recording traditions, and a paper-trail of memoranda evidences the intellectual contortions — and very occasional moral agonies — of those who did what one of them described as "the dirty washing". When, over the objections of four ministers, I was allowed to read some 500 pages of this material in order to defend Paul Henderson in the Matrix Churchill trial, I was struck by one irony. Every level of government had contrived to avoid debate over the changes in arms-sale policy towards Iraq —

continues on page 15

STRETCHED.

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Perils of a loaded chamber

NOTHING in British politics so sharply defines the difference between Labour and the Conservatives as their attitudes to the House of Lords. However radical the Conservatives may see themselves in other respects, they remain the doggedest of defenders of the unreformed and unelected upper House of Parliament. There is no more dramatic disjunction these days than to hear the same ministers demanding the restructuring of British industry and then displaying spluttering outrage at even the most gradual reform of the antiquated British constitution.

Conversely, however cautious Labour may be about uprooting the legacy of Conservative economic and industrial policy, or about chucking out Conservative restructuring of the welfare state and education, when it comes to the constitution Labour is genuinely ready for action. Tony Blair's John Smith lecture on Wednesday set out an ambitious legislative programme, coherent and directed, which will occupy a Labour government for at least the life-

time of a parliament. What is more, there is no shirking the big targets — with the conspicuous exception of the monarchy. New Labour and old Labour are here at one in now wanting at last to abolish the House of Lords as it has existed since its battles with the Liberals in the early years of the century.

Let us be clear what Mr Blair is now proposing. On Wednesday he committed himself once again to abolishing the political power of hereditary peers. "It is in principle wrong and absurd that people should wield power on the basis of birth not merit or election," he said, using an argument which applies with at least equal force to the monarchy. The balance of party loyalty among the 300-plus hereditary peers is grossly biased in the Conservatives' favour, he charged. Mr Blair explained that some of the genuinely talented hereditary peers could expect to return to the reformed house as life peers, and that there was room for further discussion about a continuing appointed element in the event of the upper house becoming an elected body.

The central objection to Mr Blair's plans is that they do not go far enough. The loss of the hereditary peers will leave some 280 life peers who take the various party whips, plus another 100 or so cross-benchers who take no whip. Even among those who will remain there is a built-in Conservative majority on most occasions. A Blair government would therefore have to do something to redress the balance in the short term and will also need to establish means by which future appointments are made. Clearly, this confers enormous extra

powers of patronage upon the office of prime minister. Unless and until the second house is elected in some as yet unspecified way, there will remain a permanent danger of party bias and nepotism.

Labour's shadow home secretary Jack Straw counters this objection by saying that the proposed "one-line bill" to abolish hereditary voting rights has to be seen as part of "a longer term project". Yes, it would be an appointed body, but "better a quango of the living than a quango of the dead". Labour would not go for a majority in the Lords, he insisted. To guard against government bias there would also be an independent advisory body.

Mr Straw's elaborations are useful but they do not dispose of the chief fear that Labour will find the temptation to reward its own chums irresistible, especially after the long years of a Conservative government which so shamelessly attempted to create its own one-party nomenklatura state. The remark which should haunt Mr Blair comes from the ennobled Herbert Morrison: "There's a lot to be said for the House of Lords." Once the reformers get the ermine on it all looks different. The genuine anxiety is that somehow, somewhere, in the new order of things the impulse to further reform will become dulled, and that Labour will bequeath to a future government of another stripe a system which will then be abused in turn for a different purpose. Better a Labour majority than a Conservative majority, many will say. But better an elected second chamber than either of them. And soon.

Court in the soap

THE BALDING attorney spewed out the soundbite his aides had doubtless been working on all day: "Don't you have any shame. You tell the Globe one thing when you're suing them and you say another here when you are suing Random House?" Joan stroked her Gianni Versace cream silk blouse and subtly shifted the slit in her black silk Valentino skirt high enough to glimpse a firm elegant thigh. Joan could scarcely believe her ears at these Nazi-like questions as she tried unsuccessfully to meet him eyeball to eyeball. Had last night meant nothing to him at all? She had experienced indescribable sensations. At least it felt like love. He had played her like a Stradivarius.

Slowly, with infinite patience, he unbuttoned her blouse and brushed first his fingers, then his mouth against her eagerness. She thought she would die of pleasure. She had forgiven him everything, even the previous day's court performance, once he was on her bed. But that was then, and this was now. She felt like a cheap tart and remembered his final words to her before he had left at dawn: "I know I'm a shit, babe, but I love you".

She knew now that she had no alternative. There was only one thing she could do. She leaned towards her box of handkerchiefs, and took one out as she pushed the manufacturer's label so it

would be in full view of the inquisitive lenses of the familiar throng of paparazzi. As she prepared to shed a knicker-white tear she rushed out of the court to her private room at the back noticing that several of the women in the courtroom were checking her for cracks. She closed the door behind her and walked over to the large gilt framed magnifying mirror she had installed for the duration. There are two kinds of people in this world, she decided: those who screw and those who get screwed. And last night, she thought gloomily, she was a front-runner in category number two. A million men had fantasised about her as they reached for their wives to take their conjugal rights. But was she fading now? She frowned as she thought of last night, then quickly stopped as she caught sight of the furrows in her magnifying mirror. Unconsciously her hand moved towards her uncupped...

Suddenly her mobile rang. She knew even before answering that it must be Jasper, her agent. Could this mean he had already sold the book of the courtroom drama? "Dear heart," he crooned. "It's looking good for Courtroom Saga. Looking very good indeed for you. There's only one clause they won't shift on. You're not allowed to write a single word yourself. Now get your butt back in there and give it a goddamned good ending." She picked up several fresh paper handkerchiefs, took a deep breath and headed serenely back towards the court. Maybe she would keep her date tonight with Nazi-eyes after all.

Edited liberally from Prime Time by Joan Collins (Arrow)

Reforming the welfare system is one thing, but cutting it to cure economic ills, as the Government intends to do, is a chimera. MARTIN WOOLLACOTT argues that tackling the linked crises of welfare and unemployment requires fundamental change. Illustration by PETER TILL



Bitter pill that offers scant relief

THE linked crises of welfare and unemployment are worsening. They underlie the tensions in Europe over monetary union, and are already beginning to dominate the American election campaign. Everywhere in the developed world labour ministers are appealing for wage restraint, social services ministers are proposing welfare cuts, prime ministers are knocking their heads. Even the United Nations is drowsing, a symbol of the times.

The British government's plans to cut the running costs of welfare are a perfect example of the way in which welfare and unemployment problems overlap. The very techniques of re-engineering which, applied in private industry, have swollen the dole queues, are to be applied to the welfare workers themselves, many of whom will no doubt soon join their former clients on the pavement outside the Job Centre. In Germany, the government, faced with the worst with the highest unemployment figures since the war, wants to cut pensions, health care, and unemployment pay. In the United States, state governments have proposed a compromise on welfare that may help Republicans and the

White House resolve their quarrel over the budget. It is a compromise, however, that would erode entitlements to welfare payments.

Cutting welfare has become almost automatic as the layoffs mount up. It is insidiously and continuously presented as the bitter pill we have to swallow if things are to get any better. Yet the evidence suggests that, at best, this is only a temporary way out of our dilemmas. Discussion is made obscure by the persistent refusal to recognise that the economic processes which produced the employment and welfare crisis have human agents, whose decisions could have been, and could still now be, different ones. They are added further by the persistent notion that money and jobs are saved by cutting welfare.

This argument is a strange one. First, it ignores the fact that welfare is one of the complex of policies that produces social peace, or a simulacrum of it. The certain result of less welfare spending is higher spending, by the state and by individuals, on other forms of security, financial and physical. The agencies which spend may not be the same, but the spending goes on. You can satisfy your citizens, you can buy them off, or

you can suppress them. Governments in practice do all three, in varying proportions. Switching between these strategies, or switching between public and private spending, doesn't greatly alter the financial problem, since all three strategies are costly and the form of spending is ultimately irrelevant.

Second, it suggests that transferring services from the public to the private realm represents a "saving". In fact, as the comparisons between British and US health spending have consistently shown, societies with largely private provision tend to spend more, because of duplication and profit taking. Third, it imagines that cuts in welfare costs to employers will enable them to compete with overseas producers whose labour costs are a fraction of those in Europe or North America. In fact, such reductions may gravely affect workers here, but have only a tiny effect on competitiveness.

The truth about reducing the welfare state, at least through the kind of reforms that we see proposed in many Western societies, is that no money is necessarily saved. This bears repetition. What happens, when welfare is reformed, is that the costs of

social help and social control are financed and spent in a different way. In effect the systems for dealing with social trouble start to move away from being paid mainly by taxation, administered mainly by the state, and aimed primarily at caring rather than guarding and suppressing. But the systems do not thereby cease to exist, or to cost money.

Harassed governments are interested in being able to offer a cure even if they know, inwardly, that it is not likely to work. They are also interested in displacing blame on to the public itself. Thus, rather suddenly, ordinary people are being accused, for example, of "not having made proper provision for their old age". Yesterday's dutiful taxpayer becomes today's shiftless ne'er-do-well.

More broadly, the Western public stands accused of achieving a high standard of living, even says in polls that it will vote for higher taxes to pay for them. Yet when it comes to it, the vote goes in that other, low-tax, slot. But the low-tax tendencies of the electorate are, it can be argued, driven by the low-tax objectives of businessmen and the affluent in general, and provide a cover for such objectives. The Western eco-

nomist history of the past 20 years needs to be looked at afresh to identify the relatively small and relatively purposeful groups which have created the difficult economy we now inhabit.

American writers like Michael Lind have argued, essentially, that a new class has seized control. In thousands of usually obscure coups d'état in businesses across the West a new kind of more ruthless manager has displaced somewhat more generous and socially conscious predecessors. Such managers are assisted by able but morally neutral technocrats, skilled at bringing in the software and organising the contracting out that leads to higher profits and smaller workforces. To these two groups can be added the politicians who respond to business pressures for lower company taxes, lower taxes on high incomes and, in the American case, higher taxes on the middle classes, and welfare cuts.

Lind's "overclass" theory, while specific to his American case, has the virtue of recognising that these critical processes are about power and interest, taking us away from the notion that economic change is like climatic change, something with no assignable

human causes, and something that can perhaps be mitigated but never opposed. Equally it avoids undue concentration on ideology, whether New Right or otherwise, as if economic shifts could be entirely put down to professors or politicians with a lightning over their heads flashing "deregulation".

Reforming welfare is one thing, but cutting it as a cure for economic problems is a chimera. A simple idea from Norway, reported this week, is that of rating firms on their record of maintaining and creating full-time jobs and giving the best of them a logo to which customers could respond as they already do to ecological endorsements from green movements. It is a little enough thing, but it has far more chance of helping than the ill-judged assault on welfare systems that the loss of jobs has provoked. What would help most would be to abandon the idea that a welfare rollback is essential to any strategy for tackling the jobs crisis. What is essential is to confront the forces in our societies which have deepened social inequalities, stripped out millions of jobs, and now propose to act as if the resulting mess was everybody's problem but their own.

Ill-bred aristos for 'a that

Rattling the bars



Ian Aitken

LET'S face it: Tony Blair's announcement that a future Labour government will ban the entire cast list of Burke's Peerage from any further part in the proceedings of the House of Lords could have been more felicitously timed. It wasn't simply that their lordships obliterated the Conservative government in a key vote on television sport just 24 hours before Blair spoke. There was more to it than that.

For the much maligned Upper House had administered an earlier humiliation on the Government the day before. It didn't make the papers because it concerned the rights of magistrates rather than the future of sport, but it probably annoyed Home Secretary Michael Howard just as much as the later vote embarrassed La Bontemps.

But the real embarrassment was experienced by Lord Strathclyde, the government chief whip in the Lords and himself one of the hereditary peers who will get the heave-ho if Labour wins the next election. He could hardly have headed off the massive humiliation on the broadcasting bill, but a bit of cloak and dagger work might have averted the earlier defeat.

What happened was that Labour peers were holding their annual winter jolly in a downstairs room when the vote was called; indeed, Tony Blair had just finished praising their dedication when the division was called. Their pinkie lordships flocked to vote, and returned to read the result on the television monitors. They'd won, and it was drinks all round.

For Lord Strathclyde had failed to spot the existence of the opposition beano, which ensured the presence of far more Labour peers than is usual on a Monday. Worse, flocks of Tories were at their own beano — the so-called

"Blue Ball" — at a distant hotel, identifying pitfalls like that is what whips are supposed to be for.

MEANWHILE, Tony Blair's warning has provoked a deluge of nonsense about the splendour of the hereditary peerage, and how much democracy owes to their selfless participation. The most hilarious came from that increasingly absurd figure, Tory chairman Brian Mawhinney. But Geoffrey Wheatcroft, the Daily Express's new top-drawer columnist, came a close second.

Whatever, as we call him at the Carlton Club, resiled off a load of names to prove what brilliant minds spring from the accident of aristocratic birth. Oddly, he didn't mention Lord Byron, who favoured the House with a magnificent denunciation of the aristocracy's treatment of the poor just before he left England and aristocracy for ever.

But the simple truth is that the real work of the so-called Upper House is done by life peers, most of them ex-MPs. The blue-bloods generally fulfil the role of the Seventh Cavalry, to be summoned by Lord Strathclyde whenever the Indians look like winning. Their greatest triumph in this game was when they voted to keep the poll tax — in defiance of the life peers.

As for the Lords' much-trumpeted role as a revising chamber, almost all the changes which it votes into government legislation are really amendments tabled by the Government itself. Far from confirming Wheatcroft's belief in the superiority of peers over commoners as a revising chamber, their purpose is simply to correct the increasingly sloppy drafting of government bills.

AS a loyal Scot, I attended a celebration of the birth of my national poet last month. It was given by two Jewish friends who described the event as a Rabbi Burns supper. I wish I'd been able to recite a spoof of A Man's a Man for 'a that, sent to me by (though not written by) Janey Buchan this week.

Here's a sample: 'Our leader can mak belted peers/ And ministers an 'a that/ I now appoints the party whip/ And writes the rules and a that/ For 'a that and a that/ WI spins on words and a that/ A black cow can become a white/ If the leader's office says that.'

Smallweed



WITH ANY LUCK, one of the oldest challenges buried at the feet of a President Thatcher or Hattersley — will be buried next week. His emergence as number

one slayer of sleaze, and the spirited way he is dealing with government bids to muzzle and malign him, should give Sir Richard Scott (as in Scott Inquiry) an unbeatable claim to preference. Also, he cycles — so there's a decent chance that those who believe in a bicycling monarchy might swiftly be converted to a bicycling presidency.

A pedant utries: Characteristically, you appear to have overlooked one essential detail. Sir Richard hails from South Africa.

Smallweed's weekly rhapsodes: In this day and age, so what? Most of the world's best presidents were born in South Africa.

THE NEWS yesterday that prescription charges were going up got less space than it might have done but for all the controversy over public sector pay. Just as the 1995 rise

in charges got rather swamped by the announcement of the Northern Ireland framework document. And the 1994 rise by reports of John Major's visit to Moscow. And the 1993 rise by a Ken Clarke plan for a crack-down on crime. And the 1992 rise because it contrived to emerge on the very same day as the news of record figures for unemployment, repossessions, and losses at Ford's. Which was much the same as occurred in 1991, when the rise in charges coincided with a major Major declaration on Europe — just as the 1990 rise had done with England's first win in 16 years against the West Indies... You simply couldn't prescribe for such a run of coincidences, could you?

GUARDIAN READERS were invited in a Friends of the Earth/Greenpeace ad this week to

"walk the route of the Newbury bypass" tomorrow. Believing this newspaper's readers are at least as good as the Telegraph's, Smallweed is staying away. For the Telegraph ad began, as The Guardian's did not: "The Marchioness of Worcester, Lady Barber and the Hon. Mrs Henry Tennant are pleased to invite leaders of the Daily Telegraph to walk the route... etc etc."

DID YOU KNOW that TV personality and former Sunday Times editor Andrew Neil was once a Hollywood star? Nor did he tell us so in his Mail column this week. "Last week", he wrote "I interviewed the splendid Simon Callow... As one of the stars of that rare breed — a British movie that is a world-wide box office success — I asked him what stopped the British film industry from making more

popular hits." Had anyone else used those words I might have suspected a grammatical error, but Neil is such a celebrated stickler for standards that we have to believe that he meant what he said.

UNABLE to wait until April 21, like the rest of us, the Wiltshire Gazette and Herald has published a special number celebrating the Queen's 70th birthday. A lucrative band of advertisers has been mastered under the banner "70 Glorious Years". In the light of the recent behaviour of her daughters-in-law, I'm sure that Her Majesty will be particularly touched by a small ad from B Patel and Co, Solicitors, of Upper Stratton, Swindon, drawing attention to their specialist services. These are litigation; matrimonial; debt recovery; and commercial.

THOSE WHO, like HM Inspectors, think standards in schools are woeful can take heart from the going rate for invective at Aston Villa FC, where a fan incensed by a rolling which went against Villa was recently heard to shout: "The referee's a Cyclops!" We could do with more of such erudition. Next time two massive centre backs mow down your fragile winger, do not shout: "Send the beggar off!" Say instead: "Who the hell do you two think you are? Scylla and Charybdis?" When some thuggy full back chops your goal-bound striker off at the knees, do not storm on the pitch and threaten him. Just shout: "Keep an eye on him, ref, he's a right little Procrustes."

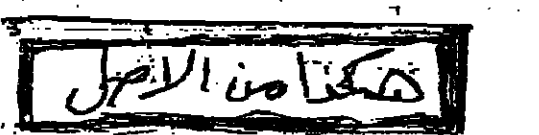
While I'm on this theme, I note that Wigan FC last week fielded a substitute called Jamie Barnwell —

Edinboro. This I think is the longest name in the British game, beating even Alexei Mikhailichenko (Rangers). I look forward to reports of Wigan fans singing: "there's only one Jamie Barnwell-Edinboro". Unlike, for instance, "there's only one Ian Wright", this claim might even be true.

RAISING ALL three party leaders for showing their commitment to the countryside by writing it a letter of supportive concern, the Times suggests that modish metropolitan enthusiasm for banning fox hunting should now be abandoned. "A recreation enjoyed by country folk of every class, as much part of the personality of rural England as its hedgerows and Norman churches, it is a liberty worth defending", the paper mauls.

Though perhaps a little ungainly in the eyes of the

modish metropolis, this comparison makes pretty good sense to those like Smallweed who spend a lot of their time in the country. Why, only last Sunday morning, I sat on a gate in Wiltshire watching a bevy of Norman churches pursuing a terrified fox through a field. St James's (our local hunt's MFI this winter) was in the lead, with St Aloysius's (at least a stone overweight since some Victorian architect tried to improve it) puffing behind, and All Saints vaulting over the gates with its usual practised nonchalance. Very soon, they'd cornered the fox in a covert, and in moved a pack of eager young hedgerows to tear it efficiently limb from limb. Thank God for the old country practices. I said to myself in my regular Even-song pew when St James's resumed its normal functions that evening.





Damage limitation... Dubrovnik, jewel of the Adriatic, through the battle-scarred window frames of a lido, and below, pre-war: much of its medieval splendour survived Serbian assaults

Hiding dirty secrets

continued from page 13

despite the fact, in these late Thatcher years, that the supporters of arms sales would have won that debate hands-down. Yet only one minister — the morally insouciant Alan Clark — had voiced the apparently unthinkable proposal that the changes might be announced and in Parliament.

The reason for this perversion of what we like to describe as the democratic process could be located in the Matrix Churchill documents in one phrase which was repeated as an excuse to avoid doing or saying the right thing, "presentational difficulties". This all-purpose euphemism for the possibility of political embarrassment had become the lodestar of minister and public servant alike, blinding them to their obligations of honesty to Parliament and of ensuring fair trials.

My abiding impression from the Matrix Churchill documents was that these deplorable decisions would never have been taken had those responsible for them been aware that they might be made public.

And that, I still think, is the only real remedy against a repetition of the arms-to-Iraq affair. The only way, within Whitehall, to refute an argument from "presentational difficulties" is to point out that there will be even more presentational difficulties if the improper or unprincipled course is followed. In other words, there has to be a real possibility of exposing the decision while those involved may still be in position of power. That means, at very least, a Freedom of Information Act ensuring that ministerial-level meetings, documents are released within five years (under the present law, at least 30 years must elapse). With protection, too, for "whistleblowers" like the hapless Mark Higgs, who had moral scruples about composing misleading letters to MPs, but was frightened by official secrecy laws.

Both Thatcher and Major have opposed these reforms by claiming they would undermine ministerial accountability to Parliament.

The Scott report will demonstrate, beyond reasonable doubt, that ministerial accountability to Parliament is a myth, and that Westminster democracy does not work when its servants become obsessed with public relations. What Scott will refute for ever is Sir Humphrey Appleby's claim that "open government is a contradiction in terms — you can be open, or you can have government". The report will prove, on the contrary, that open government is good government, and that freedom of information can lead to a culture in which decisions are not only better understood, but are better decisions.

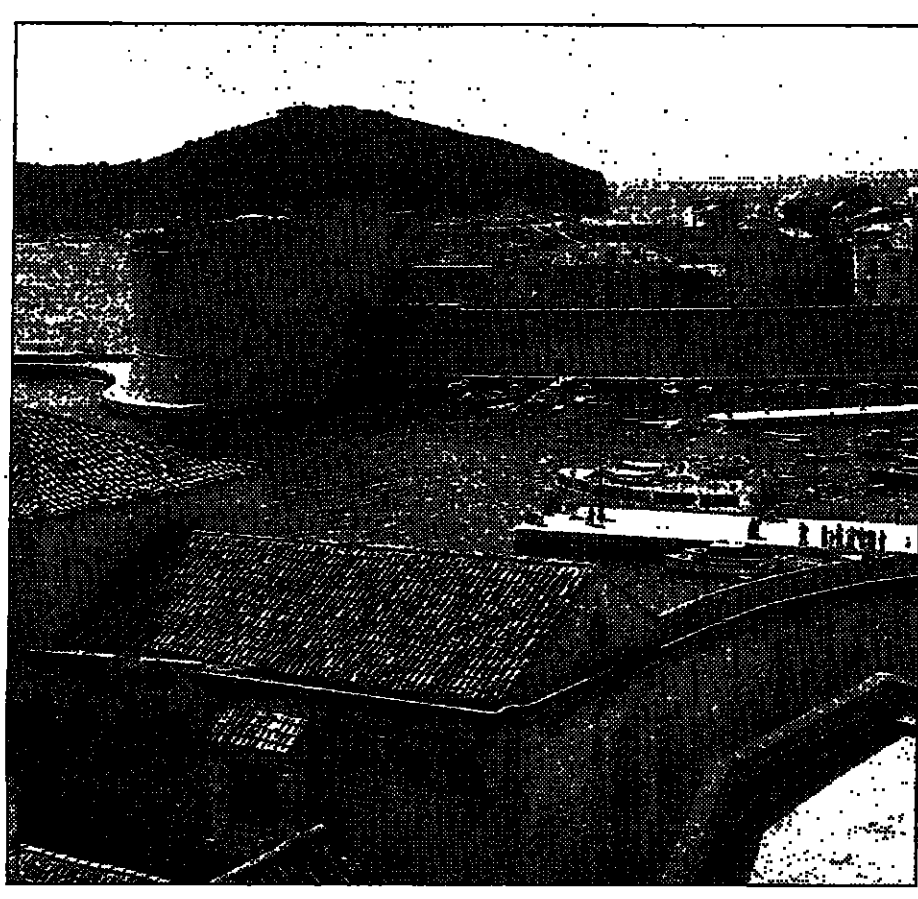
Geoffrey Robertson QC defended Paul Henderson at the Matrix Churchill trial. He is the author of *Freedom, The Individual And The Law*

Prince Charles visited Dubrovnik this week to witness the restored glory of a beautiful city after an ugly war, but, writes MAGGIE O'KANE, its suffering was slight compared to that of less privileged cities

Beauty is in the eye of the defender

PRINCE Charles's visit to Dubrovnik on Thursday was in response to an invitation he first turned down four years ago. The frenzied mayor of the city, Pero Pajević, was faxing invitations on his satellite fax-machine by candlelight: a desperate man in a long navy wool coat calling on the world to visit, while outside the shells were hitting the white marbled streets of his medieval city.

Prince Charles replied: "I need hardly say that if there was any conceivable way in which I could respond positively to your invitation, I would have done. But I fear this would probably cause intolerable problems for those



responsible for my safety." Dubrovnik was delighted he had responded at all. Few bothered. For days the local radio broadcast his pained refusal. Take heart Dubrovnik, Charles is with you.

Dubrovnik has always had friends in high places. Laid out gently at the city's feet is the Adriatic — once described by Jacques Cousteau as one of the cleanest seas in the world — and forests that stretch up into the hills. In the 1790s the Austro-Hungarian royals went there to sun their regal pelts in Europe's first nudist coves. Edward and Mrs Simpson stopped there secretly for a few days. During the first month of the siege of the town, in October 1991, the French minister for humanitarian af-

airs, Bernard Kouchner, and Italy's emigration minister, Margherita Boniver, crashed into town by speedboat, shelled half-heartedly by Serbian gun boats. Dubrovnik rang bells.

Built by artists with merchants' money, there is a snobby exclusiveness about Dubrovnik, a sense that the inhabitants are all tucked in behind the walls of their smart city together. The immense wealth of 750 years of trading helped pay for the Renaissance architecture, and for a comfortable model of early democracy which made Dubrovnik one of the first states to abolish slavery and capital punishment.

The narrow streets twist under high artisan houses be-

tween coffee shops and cathedrals. In the summer, smart ladies clip-clop up and down the marble walks beside the fountains and King Orlando mounted on his horse. The city smells of the sea, and of wood polish: the Franciscan and Dominican convents and monasteries sent the air with five centuries of bees' wax, worked into the floors in God's name.

Until that October 1991 attack and the "wanton destruction" of the "Florence of Croatia and the South Slavic Athens", most people hadn't realised there was a war going on in the former Yugoslavia. For many in Britain, the war began with TV pictures broadcasting thick ringlets of black smoke curl-

ing out of the city against the backdrop of an orange Adriatic sunset. Images that triggered memories of family holidays on the Adriatic coast.

People began to wonder: "They're just like us. What's going on?"

On Thursday Prince Charles flew in to inspect the reconstruction, but Dubrovnik doesn't really need to be reconstructed. It was protected by its history, while the new towns of Tito's Yugoslavia were not.

Sarajevo's history, art, architecture and books burned under the blunt nose of army shells. But Dubrovnik's status as a Unesco world heritage site brought it massive international attention, and a cloak of security not available

to the ugly new towns, with their flat-roofed hotels and perspex windows: these, it seemed, could be flattened with impunity.

When Dubrovnik was attacked, newspaper editors in London were screaming at harassed correspondents to find out if St Blaise's Cathedral had been damaged. One newspaper insisted on detailed graphics for an elaborate map showing where the shells had hit. The initial levelling of ugly modern hotels stuffed with refugees went on to the inside pages.

There was damage. Nine noblemen's houses dating from the 16 and 17th century were burned to the ground; the Franciscan monastery built in the 1340s, with one of the three oldest functioning pharmacies in Europe, and St Blaise's, built in 1706-15, were hit. The finely carved arches of the 15th century rector's palace were damaged, and, outside the city, many of the renaissance summer villas were razed. But inside most of the 10-foot-thick walls survived, the damage mainly limited to the roofs, where shrapnel smashed through the tiles.

"How," mused the Times correspondent, ordered to produce a guide to the damage, "do you mark chipped windowills?"

Colin Kaiser, a heritage specialist sent by the Council of Europe to assess the condition of the region, said that although there was some damage to the Sponza Palace, the city's clock tower and the Dominican and Franciscan monasteries, "it was nothing compared to the devastation in the villages around, where he described the destruction as "wanton vandalism".

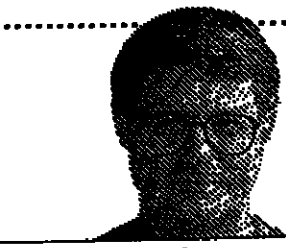
Nicola Obuljen, Dubrovnik's mayor, estimates that it will cost \$60 million to restore the town to its full glory, and the burghers of Dubrovnik intend to do the job right. Unesco has spent \$500,000 sending two shiploads of terracotta tiles from France to replace the shattered roofs.

Unesco has also produced, in Paris, a glossy catalogue detailing the damage to every building in Dubrovnik down to the windowsills. Prince Charles has donated money to the restoration of a renaissance garden outside the town. A signed copy of his watercolours fetched £150 at an auction for Dubrovnik run by Lady Jadranka Beresford-Peirse in London, which raised £26,000 for restoration work. Her charity for the Restoration of Croatian Monuments continues to raise funds for the city.

Dubrovnik, charmed and beautiful, will be one of the first cities to recover from the war. In May, the first international direct flights will resume with two flights a week from London. It has taken time for the tourists to come back. In 1993, the first summer after the end of the siege, it was reported that one German couple, a Canadian historian and a French yacht were the only foreign tourists brave enough to venture into the city; four visitors to a city that had 100,000 a year before the war.

Prince Charles's visit is another flutter of royal favour for Dubrovnik. As G B Shaw noted: "Those who seek paradise on earth should come to Dubrovnik and see Dubrovnik" — a city that survived a brutal war because it had beauty, and the eye of kings.

Paddy's star rises in uncertain times



Martin Kettle

INSTEAD of putting that spary pound on the lottery this morning, why not give yourself a sporting chance and put the money on the Tories to win the general election? In the light of this week's opinion polls, and with the Conservatives at a tempting 11-4 with Ladbroke's, it's not as much of a mug's flutter as it may look.

The reason for this is now obvious. Labour's march to victory has been knocked off course by the Harriet Harman affair. It didn't need an opinion poll to tell us that, although the polls this week confirm it. They also show that it would have been even worse if she had resigned, which will be consolation for some. The question now is to know how much Labour has suffered in the long run.

ICM in The Guardian and Gallup in the Daily Telegraph had different degrees of post-Harman blues for Labour this week. Nevertheless, both show the lead over the Conservatives sharply down. ICM by six points and Gallup by no less than 13. In the past these

swings to the Tories have sometimes proved to be just blips, as was the case last September, and this may happen again. Even so, it may take more than the Scott report to turn this one round for Labour.

There are further worrying signs for Labour in these latest polls. Labour's lead over the Tories on law and order is now down to only one point, according to ICM, clear evidence that Michael Heseltine's mud sticks and that the battle here will get even dirtier as the election nears. More important still could be the latest upturn in Gallup's so-called "feel-good" index, which in past elections has provided a better indication of underlying Conservative strength than the party ratings. It begins to look like a general weakening of the Labour position.

Nevertheless, a weakening is not a collapse. In spite of these figures, Labour remains solidly ahead with a lead which, even in a bad month, is still better than anything it achieved in the 1987-92 period. And Labour's loss is not necessarily the Tories' gain. The Conservative reputation for economic competence remains as low as ever. The Government's approval ratings have fallen, not risen, since the new year. And John Major's personal ratings have gone down to this month.

The signs of Labour vulnerability are all around, not just in the polls. In the Commons, Labour still seemed uneasy and subdued this week. There

have been Tory gains in the latest local government byelection results. There are more questions than answers at the moment. A number of them will be supplied by the forthcoming Staffordshire South East byelection, which now takes on an even greater significance than it had already.

The net effect of these events ought not to be avoided. It is becoming less, rather than more likely, that Labour will win a large majority at all. As the possibility of such outcomes hardens, so the importance of the Liberal Democrats in Tony Blair's scheme of things increases.

This has been an important week for the Labour-Lib Dem relationship, partly — though here we must tread carefully — down to Paddy Ashdown's difficulties in Yeovil. This is a tangled tale, but it is not politically neutral. From a distance I sense two things about it. First, that it is doing no good to Ashdown and that it may thus harm the Liberal Democrats generally; and, second, that Conservative Central Office is not squeamish about exploiting it, especially in the electorally vital South-west. Politics are getting dirty in that part of the country, and the election may even hang on the outcome.

The more important and more seemingly development of the week was the latest stage of the Labour-Lib Dem courtship, embodied in Blair's John Smith lecture on

Wednesday evening. It was many other things besides an address to the Liberal Democrats, not least an attempt to reclaim the high-minded ground for Labour after Harman. But constitutional and electoral reform have always been the Liberal Democrats' price for co-operation in government with Labour, so this high-profile speech by the Labour leader on these very themes sets the parameters for any post-election relationship.

Judging merely by the churlish response from some Lib Dem quarters, you might get the impression that Blair has advocated a constitution which could have been drafted by Saddam Hussein and proposed a system of public morality which would not inconvenience Ferdinand Marcos. But he has not, and relations between Ashdown and Blair are in good order.

THE two parties are now circling one another. Nothing much more will come of it before the election. But the momentum and direction are obvious. After the election things will move faster. Other things being equal, I believe Blair wishes to govern with active Liberal Democrat support, whether the numbers require it or not. But for that to happen there must be progress on electoral reform.

Blair gave nothing away to Ashdown on that week. He repeated that Labour will hold a referendum on election to the House of Com-

mons, and that he was personally opposed to proportional representation. It is difficult to see how these views can be reconciled with Liberal Democrat aspirations, especially as Blair accepts that, as Prime Minister, he will have to declare which way he will himself vote in the referendum, presumably against.

But this may not be quite the impasse that some suppose. Blair is careful to oppose proportional representation rather than electoral reform, and it appears that he may not have the same objections to the alternative vote system advocated in the Plant report three years ago, as to the PR system.

When it comes to the crunch in government, Labour may have to decide whether it wishes to initiate two referendums — on the single European currency and electoral reform — in its first term. There will be strong pressures to avoid that. Assuming that a single currency referendum is unavoidable, and bearing in mind the tremendous advantage which a victorious Yes vote on that issue would confer on Labour against a Europhobe Conservative Party, I can see the electoral referendum falling off the agenda. In those circumstances what better way for Blair to calm electoral reformers' nerves than to offer them instead, without a referendum, the alternative vote system which he has himself never repudiated? And if he did that, could Ashdown make it a resignation issue? I don't see it myself.

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Sorting Tony's peer group

IT IS notable that neither Tony Blair, your leader or Hugo Young (February 8) mention anything about the embarrassing presence of the bench of bishops in the House of Lords. This group are a nominated minority of a minority of the people of this country, yet they are entitled by law to a voice and votes in the upper house. If Tony Blair is really intent on cleaning up our parliamentary system he will have to throw these relics of a bygone age out with all the other backwoodsmen. We could then start talking about a modern democracy.

Terry Mullins, Secretary, National Secular Society, Brighthelm House, 37 Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8SP.

SOME hereditary peers argue that although they are not against losing their right to sit in the House of Lords, they would vote against a Labour government's bill to implement this because they do not approve of the system that might replace them. By what convoluted logic would they vote to oppose the wishes of an elected government when they believe that they should not be in a position to do so in the first place?

D H Kedger, 71 Lea Road, Sonning Common, Nr Reading, Berks RG4 9LH.

HEREDITARY peers are, according to Tony Blair, the "least defensible part of the British constitution". Not so; if a hereditary peerage cannot be headed, then a hereditary head of state is even less defensible.

David Morrison, 66 Lansdowne Road, Belfast BT15 4AB.

A FEW years ago, an elderly peer collapsed in a diabetic coma on the benches of the House of Lords. The noble lords assumed he had simply fallen asleep, and

paid no attention until two hours later when someone noticed a large puddle of urine lapping gently around his feet. An ambulance was called and he was taken as an emergency admission to Westminster hospital, where a team of specialist staff soon restored him to his perky self. He suffered from short-term memory loss and mild senile dementia, confusing time and place and frequently believing himself to be back at boarding school. In addition, he was doubly incontinent, could not wash or dress himself, and had an amusing habit of quoting "verbatim" from the Times while reading it upside down.

Two days after his discharge from hospital, he returned to the House of Lords wearing an incontinence pad with a urinary catheter hidden beneath his trousers, still suffering from dementia and short-term memory loss, to legislate for our nation and claim his attendance allowance.

Suffice it to say that Tony Blair has got the right idea. Patricia Barden, 35 Donne Place, Draycott Avenue, London SW3 2NH.

PAUL Kelsa and Edward Pilkington (How to get in the pink, G2, February 8) advise Labour supporters as a first step to climbing the ladder to "Join up." Since I wish to get my feet on the first rung, I would welcome suggestions on how to do this.

I am English, travel on a British passport and live in Northern Ireland but believe that I am unable to join the Labour Party. If I were Irish, travelled on an Irish passport and (as I lived in London or Luton, my subscription would be acceptable. All suggestions will be welcomed but please do not advise joining "our sister party, the SDLP." Could I apply for an expat vote?

Lots M Banyon, 11 Knightsbridge Park, Stranmillis, Belfast BT9 5EH.

More questions on Scott

YOUR leader (Trying to go Scott-free, February 8) fairly summarised the background to the arms-to-Iraq debate with the exception of one important aspect which helps to explain the increasing frenzy in Westminster. Parliament has effectively been muzzled over the whole sorry affair for the past two years.

On April 4, 1994 you published a long letter from me explaining how a commitment made to Parliament on the setting-up of the Scott inquiry — to allow MPs to continue questioning ministers on the Iraq issue — was reneged upon by ministers within days. Attempts by MPs such as myself, with a long-standing interest in the arms trade, to probe ministers were routinely fobbed off with the standard reply: "That is a matter for Lord Justice Scott." The Par-

liamentary Table Office began to reject questions on bloc, on the grounds that ministers clearly could not answer them whilst Scott was sitting. This situation was subsequently endorsed by the Speaker after complaints by myself, Peter Hain, Tony Benn and others. Since then, despite various revelations of great public and political importance, Parliament remained impotent.

Last Wednesday, I submitted 20 new Iraq questions to ministers, some for reply the day after the Scott report is published, when ministers once again become fully responsible for policy on this matter. I intend to table many more next week. Accountability must be returned to Parliament.

Llew Smith MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.



Peace talks, pay and hot air

FURTHER to your report, (Irish 'Dayton' rejected, February 8) Unionists should seriously consider attending the two-day talks proposed by the Irish Taoiseach, John Bruton, before the end of February. In return they could reasonably require that Nationalists agree to participate in the votes process mentioned in the Mitchell report and recommended by the Prime Minister, John Major. Harry Barnes MP (Lab), Peter Bottomley MP (Con), Joint Presidents, New Dialogue, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

THE best misplaced hyphen I can remember (Letters, February 8) comes from an obituary in the gremlin-dominated days of the Guardian itself. A distinguished scholar had, we were told, made a study of "low-life expectancy in Ancient Rome." O tempora, O wistaria.

David E Johnston, Wistaria, King's Worthy, Winchester SO23 7QN.

YOU report (Media moguls in a shake-up, February 9) that the ITC has given the green light to the merger between MAI and United Newspapers even though such a warehousing arrangement is outlawed under the existing Broadcasting Act.

Self-evidently, this cannot be the case. If a merger is illegal under current legislation, the ITC would take action to prevent it. The commission believes that such avoidance devices are against the spirit, if not the letter, of the 1990 Act and will be seeking additional powers in the forthcoming Broadcasting Act to prevent them in future.

Mick Thane, Director of Public Affairs, Independent Television Commission, 33 Foley Street, London W1P 7LB.

YOUR reader complaining about being without heat for a week (Letters, February 8) should count themselves lucky. I too have a three-star contract with British Gas for my flat in London where my son, stepdaughter and her boyfriend live. They have had no heating or hot water since November 19.

An engineer will come, diagnose a fault and go away and order a part. A different engineer comes back to fit it. The boiler works for 24 hours and then packs up again. Call out another engineer, who knows nothing of the previous call-out, and the pattern repeats itself with an average of 10 days between BG's visits.

And every time they come someone has to take time off work to be for a half day. I make that 82 days. Is this a record?

Annie Garton, 12 Penrose Terrace, Fitzenza, Cornwall TR18 2HQ.

Oiling the tax system

IT IS NOT just the petroleum taxation regime in Britain that is weak (Britain's \$2bn oil and gas industry, February 7). Environmental regulation of the offshore oil and gas industry is also weaker than in many other developed countries. Discharges of oil from platforms in the UK sector of the North Sea are greater than all other countries combined, and the UK still sanctions the discharge of chemicals used in the drilling process that are banned or being phased out in other countries. There is increasing evidence from independent scientific studies that oil and gas exploration and production has had detrimental effects on ecosystems over large areas of the North Sea.

Despite that evidence, and the over-production in the North Sea, the Government has increased the frequency of licensing for oil and gas exploration and production over the past few years. This has involved the licensing of many environmentally sensitive inshore areas of sea, such as the Pembrokeshire coastline and Cardigan Bay in Wales, Lyme Bay in Dorset and the Wash. This licensing has been carried out without any assessment of the possible environmental impacts in breach of EU directives.

The Government have now been forced by the EU to implement environmental assessments, but are stalling that implementation until after the current year's licensing. It could therefore be argued that licences currently being issued are unlawful.

The Department of Trade and Industry have told us their policy is one of maximum economic benefit from the North Sea resources — this does not square with Mr Major's commitments made at the Earth Summit in Rio.

Mick Green, Friends of Cardigan Bay, Broomhall, Penryn, Cornwall, Talybont, Dyfed SY24 5EH.

IN THE early days of the oil industry in Aberdeen large companies regularly employed local businesses to do small jobs. The businesses were usually self-employed craftsmen, plumbers, welders, joiners etc.

The large companies were notorious for long delays in paying their bills. One craftsman refused to be put out of business and persisted with written and telephone demands for payment. He could not afford a lawyer to assist him. Eventually he was visited by two large and rather ugly men who suggested that if he wanted to avoid trouble he should not make trouble for their client. Their multinational client was, and is, a household name in the UK, and its behaviour would plainly have had the full backing of the Deputy Prime Minister.

(Prof) Robert Moore, Bannachie, Carmel Road, Holywell, Clwyd CH8 7DD.

PETER Lilley should refuse to bow to Treasury pressure to slash at least 25 per cent of the £3.25 billion social security budget. According to Rutledge and Wright, of Sheffield University, having reduced taxes on the oil and gas production since 1983, the Government is now losing more than £2 billion a year in potential oil revenues. If Kenneth Clarke returned to the pre-1988 oil taxation system, he could pipe the increased revenues directly into the social security budget and pay for all of it.

Judith Scott, 5 Crieff Road, London SW18 2EB.

YOUR articles contain several misleading statements about the North Sea fiscal system.

1. It is invalid to relate the pre-1983 tax system to production levels in 1993. If the pre-1983 tax system had remained, taxable income would have been less by 1993 because of the widely admitted inhibitions to exploration and development under the current system.

2. Aggregate gross trading profits in any one year constitute a poor measure of taxable capacity principally because capital investment is excluded. When it is included the taxable base is much larger and has been grossly reduced. An informed discussion of the appropriate level of North Sea tax should commence with an evaluation of the expected economic rents over the lives of fields.

3. Any tax subsidy to exploration no longer exists. It was eliminated by the 1983 tax changes (which increased tax revenues).

Professor A G Kemp, University of Aberdeen, Department of Economics, Edward Wright Building, Old Aberdeen AB9 2TY.

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German integrity faces the test of those Eastern approaches

PROFESSOR Norman Stone (Dirty deeds in the east, February 7) attempts as a historian to present the very complex legal position of restitution of former property in Germany. Unfortunately, his attempt is unsuccessful.

The assertion that "the government has departed from law, told detestable lies" has no foundation. No serious observer of German affairs has maintained, let alone proved, this. The German government and judiciary are bound by the law, just as they are in the United Kingdom. Nor is there any evidence for the assertion that descendants of "great military families" with noble names could influence the outcome of a restitution proceeding.

Professor Stone's article is a series of rhetorical accusations suggestively linked with random, unsubstantiated data. No case for the court.

Peter Gottwald, Head of Press, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, 23 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PZ.

The battle for Bosnia

YOUR leader (There is no quick fix in Bosnia, February 6), underlines the importance of the civilian objectives of the Dayton Accords. I have just returned from a 10-day visit to Bosnia and the problems now facing the minorities and the most vulnerable there are not going to be fixed by Dayton or ifor.

For thousands, each day is a fight to survive: food for fuel and clean water are simply not available. Mothers, the very young and the very old are struggling in a country where the most basic social services barely exist. Clinics, hospitals, kindergartens and schools are, in many places, things of the

past. The biggest problem is the lack of personal security and the doubt in the minds of so many. Is this only a winter lull, will the Croats and Muslims be able to build a real peace, how can municipalities reconstruct themselves without a foundation of trust?

The search of atrocity sites and for war criminals is frankly less important than clearing mines and building clinics and reviving classrooms.

David H W Grubb, Executive Director, Feed the Children, 82 Caversham Road, Reading, Berks RG1 8AE.

A Country Diary

MACHYNLETH: There must be many people who used to love the old harbour at Aberystwyth and are utterly depressed by the un-benificent new marina and the urbanisation now being developed on its margins. But we have to admit that recently there was a bright spot even there. That was when the wildlife rescue ship, Ocean Defender, came sailing in. This vessel, owned by the charity, Earthkind, was greeted by our local maritime conservationists, the Friends of Cardigan Bay, who intend to use it in the spring to carry out survey work in the bay.

One of several research projects will be to census the bay's population of bottlenosed dolphins and to look for signs of disease in them that could be the result of pollution. About that possibility there has been considerable anxiety because very high levels of deadly toxins have been found in the bodies of dolphins and porpoises in

Cardigan Bay. How the poisons have got into the animals is a special mystery because this is an area of sea that is not reckoned to be highly contaminated. In the days of my youth, when we were bird-watching from the cliffs, we took it for granted that porpoises or dolphins would often be out there among the gulls, the gannets and the terns, rising out of the water with beautiful rolling movement. But today these splendid creatures have to be sought for quite diligently and you need the luck of Old Harry to see many dolphins together. The bay is now under threat from oil exploitation and all that implies, but we have to face the possibility that, even before the oil drills begin serious work, the water may already be badly polluted and we can only wish good luck to the Ocean Defender. She may well help to save Cardigan Bay from disaster.

WILLIAM CONDRY

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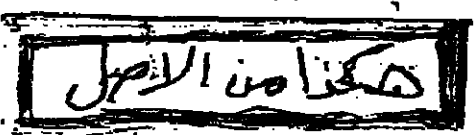
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The sex factor

It's a familiar tale of a father fighting for access to his children, except that in this case the husband was born a woman and the wife claims she was duped. CLARE DYER reports

BEHIND closed doors at the Royal Courts of Justice in London, one of the most bizarre legal dramas in the law courts' 118-year history is unfolding. A battle is being fought out between the heiress to a share of a huge family fortune and her husband of 17 years, who was born a woman. Their identities are protected by a court injunction. At the heart of the case is whether the husband, a transsexual, perpetrated a deception on the unsuspecting wife, or whether the couple colluded in an unspoken bargain which suited them both. He insists she knew all along, and common sense seems to be on his side, though psychiatrists say it is possible for an individual to block out unwelcome reality at a conscious level.

Clothed, Peter appears a small but convincing male, with a voice deepened by testosterone injections more than 20 years ago. Undressed, he has no breasts, but white scars where they were removed by a double mastectomy. He has had no surgery to alter his genitals—the female to male operation is dangerous and not fully effective. But his wife, Sarah, maintains that the discovery that he was born female has traumatised her so violently that she can not contemplate letting her former husband have any contact with their two young children, born by donor insemination.

The couple are locked in a battle over Peter's right to see the children, who regard him as their father. He has not been found to be an unfit parent, but so strongly has Sarah turned against him that the court decided her attitude would cause the children stress if contact continued and barred him, temporarily, from seeing them. That was 30 months ago. The court ruled that contact could only be re-established when the couple had resolved their disputes over money, but that still appears a distant prospect.

Currently without a job but studying part time, Peter lives in a tiny two-room flat surrounded by the legal papers which catalogue the collapse of his life. A short drive away is the former family home, a large house in nine acres, now let and on the market for £400,000. Sarah has moved with the children to another country.

Last month, a High Court judge ruled that Peter deceived Sarah and committed perjury when he married her, declaring on the form that he was a bachelor and knew of no impediment to the marriage. The ruling, which he was given leave to appeal against, bars him from making financial claims on Sarah.

The home is in Sarah's name, though Peter claims he was responsible for organising the restoration after she bought it in a run down condition for £115,000. If he loses the appeal he will have only the right to claim that which would have got as a cohabitee, based on the amount of work he put in on improving the house. Sarah is also claiming back the only asset he has — PEPs and income bonds she put in his name, of which just over £100,000 remain after spending £98,000 on the fight for contact with the children. He is now on legal aid, after she froze his assets last August.

Though he estimates that her income from family trusts is worth £300,000 a year, he is claiming only "enough for a place to live and a little business to provide me with a liv-

ing." His real focus is on the battle to see the children. "What they're expecting me to do is slink away into the distance. I shall fight it if only for the sake of the children. I'm expected to keep my temper, not get emotional and just walk away from my children, saying 'OK, that's it. It's not possible.'"

It seemed an unlikely union, even if they hadn't both been born the same sex, but he says he regarded her as his "soulmate and best friend". He came from a working class family and left school at 15 with no qualifications. She grew up in a mansion and went to a leading public school. They met in her first year at university when she got a vacation job as a barmaid in the restaurant where he was working. Her parents—who didn't realise their grandchildren were conceived by AID and only recently learned the truth about their son-in-law—opposed the relationship but Sarah gave up university and after living together for nearly four months, the couple were married. She was 20 and Peter 30.

"When we were first married," says Peter, "we lived in a rented flat that was so cold we had ice on the toothbrushes in winter, and we were as happy as Larry. Now she's saying I only married her for the money. She's saying I only want to see the children so I can get back with her because of her money."

Given that she was 19 when they met and had grown up with brothers, didn't he think it strange that she never questioned his anatomy? "No. It was one of those unspoken things. It wasn't for discussion. It's as if you've got something wrong with you, you know about it and your partner knows about it but you don't talk about it. People find it amazing that we didn't talk about it, but we didn't."

On one occasion about a year after their marriage, he says (which she denies) that she discovered his vagina tents as the sun dips. In the middle of a valley floor, a bright yellow plane, nicknamed Rupert Bear, sits like a gigantic nursery toy. It belongs to Geoffrey Clifton, Colin Firth's character in Anthony Minghella's film of the Booker-winning novel, *The English Patient*.

Firth hops around between takes all earnest politeness and gawky hand gestures that would sit better on a younger man. His hair is blondish, and his beige flying suit oddly unflattering. He is the picture of an uncomplacated Englishman of the late thirties.

Firth places great store on the contrasting powers of light and dark. He believes he is perceived as a simpler fellow on this set because he is blonde and that his Darcy in the BBC's *Pride And Prejudice* owed much of its mystery to black hair dye. It takes time to see that Clifton is yet another of these particular Firth character roles—the man whose conventional shall belie the violence of his emotions. Clifton, the jolly explorer, holds his secrets— that he works for British intelligence and is capable of murderous passion. So much for the "ordinary" and creamy Clifton: so much for Firth's frightfully decent Rupert Bear wannabers.

Americans on the set miss the contradictions in Firth. They take him at face value; they call him a "nice young man". They overlook the fact that he is now 35 and one of the few actors never out of work



Dark and brooding star: 'You get eaten up by these great parts like Hamlet... I don't want to be lost to the world'

PHOTOGRAPH GRAHAM TURNER

Mr Darcy's dilemma: to be a star or flee from it all

Becoming a pin-up after *Pride And Prejudice* was all too much for Colin Firth. He fled the country to contemplate the tyranny of the eternal self. LINDA BLANDFORD tracked the actor-mystic down in the desert

THE DESERT in southern Tunisia is cold and brown. Cliffs of mud throw deep shadows over hobbled camels and Bedouin tents as the sun dips. In the middle of a valley floor, a bright yellow plane, nicknamed Rupert Bear, sits like a gigantic nursery toy. It belongs to Geoffrey Clifton, Colin Firth's character in Anthony Minghella's film of the Booker-winning novel, *The English Patient*.

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since he left drama school to star in *Another Country* in the West End.

On stage, he played Bennett, the tortured homosexual schoolboy based on Guy Burgess. In the film, he played Judd, the communist driven by hatred of militaristic snobbery. It is said that he was beautiful in those days, and yet his Judd is played without vanity, played always under the nose and against the emotion—an extraordinary achievement from a 23-year-old in his first film. "You can't come out on stage and act grief-stricken," he says at one point. "That's histrionic. I think when you come on stage trying to be happy and then fight against grief, that's moving." (Minghella says: "Colin is delicate." Is that the same as subtle? I ask. "Subtlety is nothing to do with acting—it's how you put your fingers down on the piano keys—he's delicate.")

He is no longer beautiful, as he was, for instance, in *Valmont*, his first "big" film. Even so, his face is oddly neutral most of the time—it is his eyes which give meaning to the dark, flat voice and much of the time, he holds them away. What he withholds in conversation becomes, in time, as revealing as what he writes when he acts. In this interview, each moment of letting go is followed by a day of withdrawal in which he pulls back, as distant as if he had never met. "If my confidence was challenged," he says later, "I'd withdraw."

It is another clue. There's a pattern. After *Valmont*, he withdrew to Canada, to live with Meg Tilly, his co-star and mother of his only child, Will, aged five. After *Pride And*

Prejudice, he refused all interviews and went, when not filming, to Rome to his Italian girlfriend. "All this sudden attention threw me. I thought I knew where I was professionally. I didn't think this was on the cards." It is as if each possibility of success has led to flight.

Is it success he fears? He counters with his starring in the West End at 23. "For a while, I had to be excessively modest so people didn't think I was above them. I forgot to return a phone call and now it was because I was thought arrogant, not because I was scatty and always had nerves. Then I realised nothing had changed. I was working, that's all there was to it."

He is not difficult to be with—no moody or hostile, as some actors are. He simply measures himself out very carefully, weighing all confidences. It is a question of waiting, of listening to the spaces between words, and then making connections. Here, for instance, is a list of actors he admires: Albert Finney, Donald Pleasance, Anthony Hopkins, Robert De Niro. Not one has had a straight line to their lives.

SO HE WANTS success, but when it came again (with *Darcy*), he fled from it. Ambivalence, uncertainty, the fear of being defined—they all play their part. "There's no reason why the *Darcy* thing should perpetuate itself," he insists. "I'm not going to do that again. I'm not going to be that again. No, I'd be bored shitless."

He also says that it is important to remember the paradoxes of an actor—"the con-

stant doubt and self-aggrandisement" is one he mentions—but also "the use of a spurious truth and honesty in this deception". Given that he never believes entirely in either, it is not surprising that he feels he is pulled two ways—the longing to be with his son, now living in Los Angeles, and the need to leave.

He is the grandson of missionaries in India, with all the contradictions of service and always being an outsider that that brings. One grandfather was head of a theological college and his own teacher parents met there. That Indian heritage was ever-present in his childhood in Africa—a childhood in which he remembers Christianity as being taken for granted, the word "sin" not coming up, but always a sense of the existence of "right and wrong", of ethical values.

Interesting, too, that the roles of which he has been proudest have involved both the challenge of moral values and the destruction and healing of "ordinary" men—*A Month In The Country*, in which he played a Paschen-saele survivor whose longing for the vicar's wife was declared only by his burning eyes and the way in which he folded her rose into his book, and crushed it. Another, Robert Lawrence in *Tumbledown*, the journey of a Falklands "hero" shot and wounded.

In the end, we talk for hours. Slowly, his voice becomes richer, the hands more graceful and expressive. It becomes clear that he cannot explain, even to himself, the contradictions and polarities in his life. He can't talk about his relationships—or why they always go wrong—because he doesn't understand them himself. He is restless; he came back to England but often feels he doesn't belong. "Wherever I am, people always say, 'You're always away.' You feel like the invisible man. I'm never here, I'm never there. So where am I?"

IN YEARS to come, students of popular literature may date the death of the celebrity novel to February 6, 1996. That was the day Joni Evans, a senior Random House editor, stepped into a Manhattan courtroom and shattered the delicate set of illusions that once underpinned the multi-million dollar genre.

Evans was giving evidence in the publishing company's legal battle with Joan Collins, the British actress-turned-novelist. Since Random House wants \$1.2 million it paid Collins back, Evans was called on to explain that two manuscripts submitted by the author were too execrable to be printed. The manuscript submitted by Collins in September 1991 had, she testified, been primitive, off-base, jumbled, disjointed, alarming, dated and dull. For good measure she added clichéd, melodramatic and "just plain ridiculous".

Her withering testimony may have thrilled the thou-

Naomi (left) and Ivana enjoyed it while it lasted, but Joan Collins has written the last chapter

IAN KATZ on the fall of celebrity authors

Heinemann editor called Caroline Upcher?

Even if no one believes a Jane Austen lurks inside every Ivana Trump, the celebrity author is at least assumed to bring something to the creative mix—an insight into his or her exclusive milieu, perhaps, or even the bones of a plot. But Random House denied Collins could offer even this much. Her settings and characters had been unconvincing, Evans testified. Her plots had been laughable. Her publisher scarcely

emerged unscathed either. During her testimony, Evans also revealed rather more than her employers might have liked about the pains publishers take to turn celebrity muck into bestselling brass. Even Jeffrey Archer, a novelist regarded as a celebrity for being a successful author rather than vice versa, had required intense editing after producing 16 drafts of a single book.

The Collins case also uncovered the smiling deception practised by book editors. In internal memos and conversations, the Random House editors professed dismay and disbelief at the Collins manuscript. But to her face they said, "This book has a long way to go but it will be terrific."

If celebrities will now think twice about exposing themselves to the possibility of such embarrassment, publishers may also shirk from "leap of faith" deals with famous figures who lack proven writing ability. The American celebrity publishing scene has never

been healthier. The best-seller lists heave with confessional autobiographies by sitcom actors and the ghosted memoirs of gridiron greats. Every character in the O J Simpson saga, except the shoeshine man in the courthouse foyer, has signed a lucrative book deal.

Some publishers and agents think that, along with its cousin, the sex-and-shopping novel, celebrity fiction was on its way out before Collins stepped into court. "It's the eighties bubble bursting," said Anthony Harwood of Aitken, Stone and Wiley. "Ivana Trump and Joan Collins reflect that eighties sensibility, but the market is shifting away."

Against that, Steven Schragis of the New York-based Carol Publishing Group, warned against extrapolating too much from the Collins spat. "It's the death knell of the \$4 million Joan Collins novel, but it's not necessarily the death knell of celebrity novels."

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The triumph of An Inspector Calls put Ian MacNeil in the design superleague. So why is he an outsider in the opera world, asks TOM SUTCLIFFE

Game, set and match

AMONG the most striking theatre designs of the last ten years was the unexpected expressionism of *An Inspector Calls*. Hundreds of thousands of people all over the world have seen that crooked mushroom-house, with its rocking chandelier and exploding walls on the shiny-wet cobbled strand, since Stephen Daldry's blockbuster was unveiled at the National Theatre back in 1992. Daldry's designer was his lover Ian MacNeil — a 36-year-old Canadian, who was drafted in by the English National Opera to work with their most original directorial talent of the 1980s — the controversial New Yorker David Alden — for the farewell venture of the old regime at the Coliseum in 1988, Handel's luxuriant *Ariodante*.

Tonight MacNeil and Alden return for *Tristan And Isolde*, with Mark Elder conducting a crucial heavyweight ENO show after the sad debacle of Sian Edwards's resignation. Inspector carried MacNeil's name around the world, in cloned versions for Sydney, New York and Tokyo. It did for him what the Pet Shop Boys world tour did for the designer/

director David Fielding — let him be choosy about work. But though it is a play that took him into the design superleague, MacNeil is easy with any kind of stage performance. Apart from opera, he has also teamed up with the choreographer Lloyd Newson (on *Enter Achilles*). "It's all theatre," he says. MacNeil is a bit of an outsider in his generation of opera and theatre designers, most of whom belong to the Balls Pond Road school — named after the street in Hackney where David Fielding used to live — and hold court. The most visually adventurous of young British designers acknowledge a similar source in the so-called deconstructionist work of German designers.

The previous British design establishment, originating with Motley in the thirties, also drew on German and Czech theatre — the adorned poetic realism that Brecht liked, which was developed here at the Royal Court, later merging with Sean Kenny's kind of extravagant constructivism. But fashion changes. MacNeil belongs with the new expressionists. He never went to Germany on



MacNeil on the set of *Tristan*... 'I've come to opera late in life, but I've always had an instinct for it'

pilgrimage as some of them did, but influence isn't necessarily direct and easy. "The pictures of that stuff are fantastic," he says. "The real thing might even be disappointing by comparison. My memory of Peter Stein's *Hairy Ape*, which I never saw, is very strong. For all I know what goes on in my head is more interesting. Someone speaks to you in an impassioned way about what they see — and I've digested that." MacNeil's father is Robert MacNeil, a famous news anchorman on New York television. He was raised there and in Britain, going to school both sides of the Atlantic before doing a sub-Viv League history degree at Trinity in Hartford, Connecticut.

He came to England "because I knew it would be easier to do theatre here. I wanted to separate myself off briefly from my family. I had come out. It seemed handy to put an ocean between us. In the US, nobody wants to trust the investment required by even a straight play to a new boy, he says. So he went to train at Croydon Art School, dreamed up a portfolio, crewed backstage in the West End at night to earn money, met chorus boys, and lived in Crystal Palace. Then he returned to New York for a bit, crewed in Annie on Broadway and also on *La Cage Aux Folles*.

The break was back in Britain — an Arts Council bursary to go to the Library Theatre,

Manchester, followed by a year at Birmingham Rep. This out of town training period perhaps helps explain why he's less well known than his peers — many of whom worked for other opera designers as a kind of apprenticeship. His next break was meeting Stephen Daldry. "We started a relationship. It coincided with a period in both our lives where we wanted to start in a different way." They worked together at the tiny Gate Theatre, in Notting Hill, on shows which set new standards of fringe theatre design.

Colleagues admire MacNeil's work, which is still surprisingly economical: even *Machinal*, which looked hugely extravagant, was in fact a brilliantly inexpensive use of the existing Lyttelton machinery and the vast backstage space.

"I am operatic," he says. "I like big. I also like text. I like actors. I like the roughness of theatre, the haziness. I'm quite aware I've come to opera quite late in my life. There's always been an instinct for it. But it's not like for 15 years I was killing myself to do opera. Opera has come by."

His operatic influences are David Fielding and Philip Prowse. He also admires the way some designers are using painted cloths, which he doesn't do. "I'm not figurative. But I love all that, being illusory and breaking the illusion at the same time. I liked

The height of emotion

Television Adam Sweeting

IT'S Friday, it's time to rent a video again. It's a scheduling graveyard, groaning with repeats and novelty programming, all glued together with blobs of ancient comedy-Polytilla. Channel 4 are so desperate that they've hired Chris "Ginger Toothbrush" Evans to save it with TFI Friday (live and unreviewable, but doubtless really zany).

So it's a set of crumpoms and some high-quality thermal underwear to *Inside Story* (BBC1), for Alison's Last Mountain, an effort to make a human-interest documentary which asked difficult questions and took it for granted that the existing wouldn't be happy. It was partly a tribute to climber Alison Hargreaves, killed in an avalanche after climbing K2 last year, but mostly an examination of how her husband and children were coping with the loss.

Hargreaves and Jim Ballard had been married for seven years and lived together for 15, and accepted that Alison's career as a mountaineer was her vocation and the job which kept the family clothed and fed, thanks to sponsorship and publishing deals. The film was structured around Ballard's visit to K2 with their children a few weeks after her death.

It made you want answers. Why did Ballard want to make so painful a trip with a TV crew in tow? How could he remain unmoved when sitting through Alison's salvaged possessions, or while watching

her personal video diary from her successful K2 ascent? Was Alison driven to keep on climbing by the aggravating drone of his voice? Ballard was spiky and difficult, and his unfinching pragmatism (she died doing what she wanted to do, etc) grated after a while. But without him, the film would have been a sentimental, self-indulgent shambles. As it was, you were left to ponder the value of human relationships, the nature of parenthood, and what, in the end, a life is worth.

Which was all damn heavy stuff compared to *Notre Babylon* (ITV). It's becoming quite difficult to spot the difference between Friday night and Saturday morning — you get splattered with non-stop pre-teen drivel in both places — and Dani Behr's recipe of pop groups, supermodels and items to make body guards or psychotic Brazilian footballers looks about four years out of date. Claudia Schiffer demonstrated once again that supermodels are for looking at and not for talking to, while Behr's interview with Noel Gallagher was two characters desperately counting the seconds before the next commercial break.

At least *Gag Tag* (BBC1) makes no pretence at being aimed at anybody under 40. Bob Monkton has been installed as host, and is apparently contracted to deliver at least 30 per cent of the jokes every week. Eddie Large gave him a run for his money though, especially in the charades round, where he had to give his team male clues whereby he could identify movie titles. "I washed the goats at too high a temperature?" Oh, hurry up — it's Honey, I Shrank The Kids.

Reviews

POP

Northern Uproar

THE GEARAGE

NORTHERN Uproar have their youth to thank for their position, which is currently on the cover of a music paper near you. In interviews, this quartet of 17-year-olds from the Manchester suburbs obligingly leer at anyone old enough to remember the Thatcher government (though they profess a fondness for the Beatles). Even better, as far as adherents are concerned, is the rudimentary grasp of Oasis-like songsmithery exhibited on their two singles. What they lack, though, is a nascent Lennon or McCartney, or even a Noel Gallagher, and nowhere is it more evident than on stage.

Live, Northern Uproar are an act of four quarters, each member contributing equally to the undistinguished guitar-

bushery. Bassist/vocalist Leon Meya, though nominally the frontman, is no more attention-grabbing than the drummer; the two guitarists are as close as you can get to invisibility. The brief set is dominated by the energy-rush of the first single, Rollercoaster. Unfortunately, it's only the second number they play, and, from there it's downhill all the way. Most of the following six or seven songs — which Meya doesn't introduce — are the sort of *Paul McCartney would use to warm up*. One particularly drab example of *balladous rockness* does stand out, the guitars ponderous and all over the place.

The one surprise is how tame they seem. You might have anticipated belligerence; the cover of one of their records pictures Meya administering a boomer-booted kick to the camera. In front of a sold-out throng, however, Meya devolves into an awkward, uncomfortable adolescent.

Caroline Sullivan

JAZZ

Jimmy Smith

THE RHYTHMIC

THE WORDS sprightly septuagenarian, cliché or not, trip off the pen when discussing Jimmy Smith, not only because of his edgy stage persona but because of how and what he plays.

Apart from employing the packed house as a backing choir, he managed at one point to browbeat chattering diners into silence.

Forty years ago, he revolutionised jazz on the organ with his fast-fingered bebop, his full use of available stops and pedalled basslines. Under his influence the Hammond organ became linked to a particular kind of soul-blues, reflected in Smith's programme at the Rhythmic, where most numbers fitted the 12-bar pattern. The opener slipped right

into this groove, with Smith's slightly muffled, expertly timed interjections providing the ideal backcloth. He then switched to a more pronounced back-beat, propelled by the very lively saxophonist Jackson on drums, and took the main solo, slipping in a few bars of *The Flight Of The Bumble Bee* that undoubtedly suited the instrument. Probably the most sustained passage came after an unexpectedly introduced a snappy foot-tapping ballad and just sat back and milked the organ for its orchestral colour.

Tenor saxophonist Herman Riley, who had vied with Smith for the honours last time round, came into his own on the final figural, straight out of the Chicago blues, with sax and organ taking the roles of guitar and harmonica.

Jimmy Smith plays at the Rhythmic, London tonight (0171-713 5859).

Ronald Atkins



Ariodante... luxuriant venture at ENO

To boldly split infinitives

Radio

Lyn Gardner

THE REITH lecture series (Radio 4) has long looked like a museum piece. But it turns out that all the outdated lecture format required was a dusting down. Jean Aitchison, who holds the Rupert Murdoch Chair of Language and Communication at Oxford, turns out to be a jolly, no-nonsense Mrs Mopp.

On Tuesday night in the first lecture of the series, which goes under the umbrella title *The Language Web*, Aitchison

blew away the "cobweb of worries" that surrounds language use. Double negatives? No problem, says Aitchison. Split infinitives? The more the merrier. This is a woman I could warm to. (Prepositions at the end of sentences are OK too).

She certainly knows how to use a well-placed soundbite to illustrate a point. There are not many people who would be brave enough to use snippets of Janet Street-Porter, Lenny Henry and Cilla Black to illustrate the richness and diversity of the English language. Broadcast on Radio 4, this probably qualifies as an act of sedition.

But Aitchison has no truck with the self-appointed lan-

guage police, or language flat earthers as she calls them, who decree falling standards. Language doesn't decay, she argues. It changes. People pick up changes because they want to. They match their clothes and hairstyles to the social group they want to conform with; they also maintain their language in a normal and healthy human behaviour. Listen to the radio for a day and you'll hear this in action. Nobody on Virgin or London Newstalk sounds like Celia Johnson or Trevor Howard. On the World Service it's hard to find anybody who doesn't. Radio 3, with the exception of Paul Gambaccini, still favours formal speech and Oxford accents, while the country music

jocks often sound as if they're aping the vernacular and twang of fifties American B-movies.

Of course, Aitchison's argument that it's only sensible that we speak to babies, bus conductors and students in different ways, has its downside. You only have to tune into Six-6-Six on Radio 5 Live to hear David Mellor being patronisingly matey with football fans. He makes Terry Wogan on *Wake Up To Wogan* (Radio 2) sound like a model of civility.

In fact, for the real fruit salad of speech forms and accents, you can't beat Radio 5 Live. I know it's not a fashionable view but I rather like this station. It has the intimate, friendly feel of a local radio station but also retains some of the gravitas of Radio 4. It has settled in nicely, no longer sounding as if it's just filling in with patter until the next cup

JUDITH MACKRELL on the Royal Ballet's premieres on Aids and seduction

Defiant to the pointe of no return

AIDS HAS a particular resonance for dance — not only because the disease has cut such a grim swathe through the profession but also because the world tends, ironically, to see a kind of immortality in the beauty of dancers' bodies. Yet Aids is not an easy subject for choreographers, for dance cannot document or analyse. It is poorly equipped to deal with the daily grind of illness or the enormity of individual loss.

But for Matthew Hart, aged 23, Aids is the inescapable issue for his generation, and his new ballet, *Dances With Death*, plunges bravely into it. His basic idea, though sounding trite, actually works well. The white-clad corps de ballet represent a group of healthy cells and Hart moves them through elegant patterns which image the body as a formal, utopian community. As the ballet progresses a group of red dancers (the virus) invade these patterns, moving with a malign, obscene energy.

brothel. Hart also isn't helped by his music. Though Britten's *Violin Concerto* creates an edgy space for the dance to move in, its tensions are too internal, too formal to support the cathartic emotions he's striving for.

The *Invitation* is also a young man's ballet, showing the seduction of a pair of adolescents by a desperate adult couple. It's 19 years since this was last performed. Some parts do now seem stiffly caricatured but others are freshly shocking.

The schoolroom naivety and discipline of the adolescents' world is comic-book stuff and the older couple are initially unconvincing in their mad-eyed marital discord. But as the ballet shuffles sexuality and innocence, a more complicated reality emerges. The dead fatness with which the man partners his neurotic wife defines some truth about their marriage, while the pas de deux between him and the Girl shows how her innocent steps become, for



Jonathan Cope and Belinda Hately in Matthew Hart's *Dances With Death*

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The great grub war — the future of Brit

The great grub war - and how we lost it

The future of British food is in jeopardy and, argues MATTHEW FORT, we have only ourselves to blame

WHEN I was a lad, I fell in love with the weir on the River Thames. There is a class of food writer for whom the names of our food products have a similar magic. Has the world any more fair, wrote Her Grace, the Duchess of Devonshire the other week, than "Morecambe Bay shrimps, Harrogate toffee, Whitstable oysters, Colman's very Norfolk mustard and Kentish cobnuts?"

"For something more substantial," she urged, "go to Cumberland, Lincolnshire and Newmarket for sausages, to Bath for Olivers, to York and Bradenham for hams, to Scotland for haggis, venison, Arbroath smokies, baps, finnan haddock, Gooseberries, rhubarb, horseradish, Cox's orange pippin's and grouse don't come far from home."

How true, how very true. But are any of them any good? The French may not have been the first to discover the magic of the geographical brand, but they have brought the concept to its highest pitch. How many gastro-travellers have not been separated from Scotland for haggis, venison, Arbroath smokies, baps, finnan haddock, Gooseberries, rhubarb, horseradish, Cox's orange pippin's and grouse don't come far from home?

There are no such laws in this country, no rigorous screening process, and few associations, societies or brotherhoods ensuring that the minimum standards are high and that those standards are maintained out of pride in the product.

Anyone who played a part in the Guinness Great Sausage Guests of a few years back, will bear witness to the truly astonishing amount of garbage passing itself off under the disguise of Uncle Mordred's Old Fashioned Pork Burgers. While there were many sparkling games, the amount of dross and the degree of dross would have

given dross a bad name. So when people take up the chorus about the quality and abundance of our home-grown produce — "second to none", "heritage is what we can be proud of", "foreigners are always amazed" — it is as well to take it with a ladle of salt.

That is not to say that we don't have brilliant cheeses, meats, fish, vegetables, pies, hams and so on. We do, but their survival and the maintenance of standards is left to individuals, who, on the whole have to be mad to do what they are doing, because they get small thanks, little help from their fellows, local authorities and government, frequently endure abject poverty and run the risk of being forced into bankruptcy through the ill-judged, malicious brutality of any one of the above-named bodies.

The decline in the number and quality of our native products should be almost as great a matter of concern as the destruction of the rain forests, because that is what it resembles most closely. If we are not careful, in a few years time all that's left will be a few examples of heritage farmers producing traditional heritage fays.

For 50 years, since the U-boat blockade during the second world war almost succeeded in starving Britain into submission, successive governments have followed a macro-agricultural policy designed to achieve self-sufficiency and cheap food. The result is that we now import more food than ever before — worth £2.4 billion last year — and the industrialised systems and competitive culture are responsible for an unprecedented series of food scares and the undermining effect that has accompanied them.

It is all very well for ministers and others to write on about "unparalleled range of choices", when no one really wants that's on offer. As Derek Cooper succinctly puts it in his forward to the

1996/97 edition of Henrietta Green's *Food Lover's Guide to Britain*, "There is an abundance of food about but it raises a low level of expectation."

Such low expectation reduces still further public interest in forms of cooking which depend on trust in the high quality of ingredients. It is a little difficult to attack a steak and kidney pie with much vim if you think you're going to get BSE from the steak part.

Such consumers have to share responsibility for helping to create this dire situation. We have come to expect strawberries 365 days a year, and asparagus in December. We want it now and we want it cheap.

"Is there anything more depressing than being faced with a peasant in May?" said the Duchess of Devonshire. For most of us the question hardly arises, not because we don't like peasant but because we've lost all sense of their season.

A second reason behind the decline in our national culinary culture is the almost total lack of interest by our native-born chefs. The towering giants of the profession will turn out immaculate French or even Italian dishes. They know what to do with truffle oil and have as deft a way with a sabayon as any of their Continental counterparts.

But how many have studied the structure of a trifle, or thought long and hard about the nature of a pie? Did you know there isn't even a word

in French for "pie", "quelque chose en crouste" is not the same thing at all.

And it's much easier to send a van to Rungis market outside Paris twice a week and stock up with pigeons, ducks, mushrooms, vegetables and cheeses than to hunt them down in your own neighbourhood, or persuade the admittedly deeply conservative farmers to produce them.

In other European countries, the direct link between restaurants and the producers has always been far stronger. The French, for example, having failed to dominate the world by passage of arms or diplomacy, have resorted to a form of cultural imperialism of which gastronomy is the fiercest cutting edge. But behind it is a serious commercial purpose. If everyone thinks that French food is wonderful, they will want to buy lots of it. The reputation of French cooking is second to none — not surprisingly, because the French have made sure we see it that way.

In fact, lots of French food is no better than ours, but we are still in thrall to the mystique, carefully nurtured by a tiny proportion of total food production, found in the rural markets and among artisan butchers and bakers, and of course in restaurants.

And these restaurants know that there is a basic law of marketing: you can't afford to stand still. You have constantly to be introducing new products or people will get

bored and buy something else. So all these bright and talented chefs have been producing variations on local produce and local dishes. There is even a phrase for it, "l'art renouveau en cuisine du terroir", any chef worth his salt will say to a visiting journalist inquiring after the source of his or her inspiration. The development of French cooking has been based on its own ingredients and culture.

The development of British cooking has depended on what we can import, the natural consequence of centuries-old imperialist tendencies. In the introduction to *Sauces, Stocks and Aromatics in The English Kitchen*, Elizabeth David wrote, "The English people have a natural taste for highly seasoned food". This is not, she suggests, the result of the need to doctor and disguise poor quality or half-rotting meats, but the natural consequence of a tradition that goes back to the 14th century and beyond.

She cites recipes from the 15th century containing ginger, pepper, mace, cloves, cinnamon and galingale. "These recipes calling for fewer spices make up for the lack in mustard and vinegar, herbs, wine and ale."

Few centuries on we are still at it, importing, borrowing and doctoring olive oils and sun-dried tomatoes, lemon grass and soya sauces, mangosteens and preserved limes. But there has been one important change. Whereas once we imported them and put them to work, jollying up our native dishes, binding them into our own culinary tradition, now we simply take on the dishes wholesale.

Restaurant menus and supermarket chiller cabinets are stuffed with ersatz combinations drawn straight from the cooking traditions of Italy, Thailand, Spain, China, France and India. Dinner parties are dominated by char-grilled chicken breasts with gilled peppers in a kaffir lime

leaf infusion and steamed Chinese cabbage.

It is, of course, a mistake to believe that it is only the exotic delicacies that hold sway. That is the delusion of food-writers and personalities and their middle class acolytes. For most people, other immigrant foods are those which have won their hearts and minds, the mass produced, mass produced foods of America — hamburgers, deep-fried chicken, deep-pan pizzas, saturated in fats, steeped in sugars.

It is not so much that we neglected our own culinary heritage as abandoned it. Where it does survive, it is in the form of culinary embalming. We extol the virtues of the steak and kidney pudding, the shepherd's pie, faggots. There is The Great British Breakfast, with fried bread as its central altar-piece, and the Great British Pudding such as jam roly poly, Sussex Pond Pudding, ye olde trifle, but these dishes, excellent as they are, represent a state of the art several centuries old. The steak and kidney pudding and the Great British Pudding are to food what the abacus is to computing.

Where culinary investigation has been undertaken, it is in the form of archaeology. Did "Burnt Cream" predate Creme Brulee? What are the authentic country dishes of Lancashire Hot Pot. Can we revive cherry potage?

There is that dreadful British tendency to hark back to some imagined golden age, when the world was a purer, better place, and the food was purer, better stuff. This is, of course, total nonsense. The history of British food is one of adulteration, dilution and tampering.

Even those who clamour loudest about the excellence of our native produce, are less convinced that we know what to do with them. When I asked the Duchess of Devonshire whether she thought people treated their native foods properly, she answered with a trenchant "no".

If it is any consolation to Her Grace, it was ever thus. In the preface to the 1845 edition of *Modern Cookery For Private Families*, Eliza Acton wrote, "It cannot be denied that an improved system of practical domestic cookery, and a better knowledge of its first principles, are still much needed in this country, where, from ignorance, or from mismanagement in their preparation, the daily waste of excellent provisions almost exceeds belief."

However, there is a clue here to the essence of British cookery, and why, in most of its modern forms, it has gone so wildly off the rails. Let us forget for a moment, the nonpareil quality of our ingredients. Let us consider what we do with them when we have them. What is the nature of British cooking?

If you look through the introductions and forewords and instructions of even the great classic writers, you will not find many clues. For one thing, you get a strong feeling that even the fiercest defenders really think, in their heart of hearts, that British cooking is inferior to that of other countries.

For another, even our greatest writers seem at a loss to know how to define its qualities. "What each individual country does do," wrote Jane Grigson in *English Food*, "is to give all elements, borrowed or otherwise, something of their natural character". And then, infuriatingly, she neglects to tell us what the natural character of English food actually is: regional or seasonal or technical or none of these things?

The answer, increasingly, would seem to be none. The culinary traditions of many nations already flourishing in this country may make the development of a single "national" culinary culture an absurdity. It seems a pity, however, that the cooking of the old country does not share the vitality and creativity of these it has welcomed so greedily.



It is not so much that we neglected our own culinary heritage as abandoned it

Illustration by GEOFF GRANDFIELD

The shape of capital things to come

A new-look London for the year 2000 has caught the imagination of architects and the public alike. DEYAN SUDJIC looks at some ideas for the future of the great metropolis

THE RESPONSE to the Architecture Foundation's programme of debates on the future of London has been nothing short of astounding. Quite unexpectedly, what were planned as a series of well-meaning but essentially

arcane private conversations about the shape of the capital have turned into highly-charged public events. The venue has shifted from a tiny church in Piccadilly to Central Hall in Westminster, large enough to take 2,500 people. January's opening

session was packed to hear Richard Rogers, John Gummer and others discuss where London, rudderless for a decade, is going in the next century. It was certainly the largest general audience that Gummer has ever had a chance to discuss urban policy with. And now that Lord Howe has publicly conceded that abolishing the GLC was a mistake, even Gummer is now close to admitting that London does need leadership of some kind, "if only it could be non-political".

The next session in February brings together Terence Conran, Piers Gough and the

engineer, Alan Baxter, with the focus on the under-utilised potential of the Thames. Inhabited bridges, a serious riverboat transport system and the potential of the restaurant business to bring new life into run-down areas are all on the agenda. Over the next six months, further debates will tackle everything from transport to housing and from culture to the future of the parks.

It's important not to get carried away. The debates may sound like an assertion of old-style grassroots democracy, a town meeting for a giant city. But they are still essentially talking shops. Yet their extraordinary success suggests a pent-up demand among every section of Londoners for a chance to shape what the city can be.

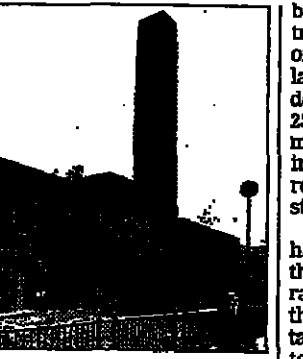
There are innovative local authority planners, such as Fred Mansford from Southwark, there are exciting individual projects like the Tate's Bankside museum of modern

art. There is even the chance of some radical new architecture in London: Will Alsop has a plan to enable passengers arriving at Blackfriars railway station to choose whether to get off on either the north or south bank of the Thames.

This not only does something remarkable for the geography of the capital, but could be the most beautiful of the architect's schemes to date, as shown by models at the Architecture Foundation's gallery in St James's as part of the exhibition accompanying the debates.

But what London has not had since the 1940s, when Patrick Abercrombie drew up the regional development plan, is any sense of vision that goes beyond the pragmatic and the mundane. What has been lacking is a vision that brings ideas, people and architecture together.

Remarkably, that wartime plan is still shaping the way London develops. Abercrom-



Revitalising the river: the Tate's Bankside museum

bie designated a military runway at Heathrow as the capital's major airport, and the South Bank as its cultural centre. He even suggested a high-speed rail link from Heathrow to Paddington. Now, 50 years later, that project is within sight of completion.

After Abercrombie, planning got the worst of names on

both sides of the political spectrum. The result was the chaos of the great lurch into Docklands in the 1980s: a surge of development that marooned 25,000 office workers in the middle of a sea of mud with inadequate transport and roads and a generally abysmal standard of architecture.

The retreat from planning has left London uneasy about the potential of attempts at radical urban surgery. Most of the architects at the debates talk about ambitious schemes to knit together the north and south banks of the Thames.

Richard Rogers dreams of making the South Bank an essential part of the West End and sheltering the Hayward Gallery under a cliff of glass. Michael Hopkins is proposing a cable car link jumping off at Covent Garden, pole-vaulting across the Thames on a single steel strut and landing up at the foot of the Festival Hall. They find it very hard to be taken seriously.

The most common response outside the architectural ghetto is the assumption that though that kind of thing might work in Paris, it goes against the grain in London. In fact, the two cities, a whole order of magnitude bigger than any of their European rivals, have leaptfrogged each other in attempts to outdo the other's best ideas over a couple of centuries. It is perhaps the prospect of going several steps better than Mitterrand's Paris that is behind the bubbling ferment of architectural ideas reflected by the foundation's debates.

Initiatives like this cannot be reduced to bureaucratic guidelines. They depend on creating a climate in which a sense of excellence can flourish.

Just look at Virginia Bottomley's ludicrous new logo for London to see what can go wrong when a committee tries to come up with an aesthetic idea.



Money Guardian

The hidden cost of loving

When the kissing stops, financial heartbreak starts

Teresa Harter

LOVE may not be time's fool, but we are whenever we fall in love — unless we make sure that our hearts do not rule our cheque-books.

With one in three marriages ending in divorce, and countless other relationships falling apart, it doesn't pay to bet on your love being everlasting.

So practising safe finance from the outset can save the agony of heartache later on. And this applies equally for men and women.

Most couples are ill-advised to open joint bank and savings accounts, particularly at an early stage in the relationship. Both parties to a joint account are jointly and severally liable for the debts therein. If one partner incurs huge debts, the other will have to meet them.

Couples are wise to keep their accounts with different banks as, at best, two accounts with one bank may be viewed as a whole when granting loans to one partner; at worst banks have been known to take money from one account to meet the liabilities of another. Separate accounts will also prevent runaway spouses robbing you blind before they abscond.

The main advantage of joint accounts is that should one partner die, the other has immediate access to their combined funds. Separate accounts become part of the estate, which can mean long delays before a partner obtains access.

Joint credit cards can also be a liability when love dies. The main cardholder is liable for the debts of the associate cardholder, which means that you may end up paying for your former lover's holiday in Tahiti designed to erase you from their memory.

Those with divorce in mind should also consider keeping life assurance separate. Although more costly initially, such policies will pay out on both deaths rather than one, and prove more adaptable than joint life policies.

Similarly, repayment mortgages are more flexible than endowments when a couple part. There are substantial

penalties for endowment policies surrendered early.

New laws are beginning to give cohabitants some legal rights — but the unmarried still have no rights over a partner's assets if there is a break-up, although parents may have the right to maintenance where they are looking after children. The Family Bill, which is now in the House of Lords, gives victims of domestic violence the right to continue living in the cohabited home for six months — a power which can only be renewed once.

But since January, cohabitants have been given the same rights as married spouses to a partner's estate when he or she dies without making a will. Under the Law Reform Succession Act, partners and spouses have an automatic right to the first £75,000 of an intestate estate, and a life interest in the remaining half, with the other half going to any surviving children.

This change may not be welcome news for many married couples. Mary Hase, of accountants Hereward Phillips, explains: "Most couples believe that if they leave everything to their spouses, then it will pass automatically to the children. This may not be the case in future if the husband or wife finds a new friend, who may have a claim on the estate, which they leave to their own children."

But if spouses will their share of property directly to the children, an inheritance tax bill could be triggered, as only transfers between spouses are free from tax.

Cohabitants are not eligible for tax-free transfers on death, which explains why so many famously unwed couples tie the knot on their death bed. Similarly, married couples can swap assets free from capital gains tax — the unmarried cannot.

Cohabitants with children can claim a married couple's tax allowance but they will not qualify for state benefits for married people such as a widow's pension. Some company pension schemes also will not make payments to an unmarried partner.



Romantics who should run for cover

Jill Papworth

THE thousands of couples who will get engaged next Wednesday — St Valentine's Day — should give some thought to the less romantic side of marriage: the cost.

The average bill for a wedding last year was nearly £8,700, according to Wedding and Home magazine. They estimate the figure for weddings in 1996 will top £9,000. This expense is worth protecting through insurance.

The first item to be adequately covered should be the engagement ring, either under their own home contents insurance or that of a parent's. The average amount spent on an engagement ring is around £550. Most standard contents policies automatically cover items worth up to £1,000 or £1,500 against loss or damage in the home, so only very expensive rings will have to be specified separately.

But only if your policy includes "all risks" cover for individual valuables should you have a valid claim should your ring be lost, stolen or damaged while outside the home. Get a dated valuation when you buy the ring and keep it and the receipt in a safe place.

It makes sense to spend an extra few pounds on wedding insurance to protect against the expense of an unlooked-for

disaster spoiling the big day. While only an estimated one in 80 couples buys such insurance, more of the 300,000 couples likely to get married this year might add it to their planning list if they considered what could go wrong.

Among the list of wedding day disasters recorded by insurers is a bride whose £1,000 dress was ruined when her five-year-old brother painted on it, a groom who developed chicken pox the day before the wedding, a couple whose photographer dropped dead when he arrived at the church, and a summer wedding where the guests were forced to flee when a spark from a barbecue set fire to the hotel.

The cover you would expect to find in a standard wedding policy starting at around £35 includes cancellation costs because of unforeseen reasons, damage or loss of wedding clothes, the cost of retaking unsatisfactory wedding photographs, loss of or damage to presents within 24 hours of the wedding, lost or damaged wedding rings and liability for accidental injury or damage to property.

But one universal exclusion is cover for either bride or groom changing their mind and falling to turn up.

And always read the small print carefully; cover varies substantially from company to company.

Some policies, such as Cornhill's Weddingsurance at £46.12 covering cancellation

expenses of £2,500, and General Accident's policy, starting at £60.99, cover against the costs of any wedding supplier going bust. Others restrict their insolvency cover to the reception venue only.

Some insurers only cover damage to wedding attire before the wedding itself, so you are not covered if the £1,000 silk dress you plan to pass on as an heirloom to future generations is ruined by spilled red wine or a cigarette burn at the reception. One insurer

said: "We'd be open to abuse if we covered dresses after commencement of the wedding. Everyone would be purposely spilling red wine down dresses they could never wear again in order to get their money back."

Policies including Wedding Care, Weddingsurance and Methodist Insurance, however, do cover clothing throughout the wedding.

Other variations to look out for include policies which cover wedding photos but not videos, those which exclude redundancy of the bride or groom as grounds for a cancellation claim, and those including Methodist, Ecclesiastical and General Accident which levy a 25% excess on all claims.

Cornhill's Weddingsurance is the only stand-alone policy so far to cover couples joining the growing band of romantics who opt for an overseas wedding, though Britain's largest

travel insurer, Home & Overseas, offers a policy in conjunction with tour operator Inspirations which specialises in foreign wedding packages.

While most wedding insurance policies cover presents for a short period after the wedding, typically 24 hours, you should check that gifts are insured after this, especially if you are going away on a honeymoon, leaving them unattended at home.

A few insurers, including Eagle Star and Norwich Union automatically increase the maximum sum assured on home contents policies by around £3,000 for a month before and after a wedding while others such as the Royal will cover wedding presents for an unlimited period so long as the policyholder tells them they are going to keep the gifts in the home. But not all companies offer this facility.

Taking a fix on savings bonds

Cashpoints

THIS week's favourite investment product would appear to be the fixed-interest savings bond.

NatWest Bank has introduced the High Income Bond which pays monthly interest fixed at 6 per cent after tax on minimum deposits of £5,000 until July 31, 2001 — but there is a risk that an investment may be eroded.

The amount of capital payable at the end of the term depends on the performance of the Footsie share price index of the top 100 companies listed on the Stock Exchange. If the index rises by at least 37.3 per cent over five years investors will get their deposit back in full.

However, the bank will only return 85 per cent of the original investment if the index fails to rise by the set level or falls over the term.

The Woolwich Building Society has a three-year fixed-rate bond paying 8.4 per cent gross and 4.8 per cent after tax on minimum deposits of £1,000. The returns on investments over £24,999 is fixed at 6.65 per cent before tax (4.99 per cent net).

The Coventry has a four-year fixed-rate bond with a minimum investment of £2,000. The new bond will pay interest rates which are raised year by year on a sliding scale starting from 5.75 per cent gross (4.31 per cent net) to 9.25 per cent gross (6.93 per cent net) in the fourth year.

NORTHERN Rock has branched out to Guernsey to offer its customers the benefit of the tax haven. Its new offshore instant access account pays interest gross at 6.45 per cent on deposits of at least £10,000.

MIDLAND Bank is seeking Welsh pockets for its new bilingual credit card. The Welsh card gives customers a Mastercard and Visa for a yearly fee of £12. Non-Welsh speakers need not fear as the card works in English just as well. Keen Welsh cardholders will not mind carrying the flag cheap. *Cyfradd i'w canny y mis APR 20.9% canny o burcasu a 22.7% canny o godi arain; or, to put it another way, charges on the card are set at an hefty APR of 20.9 and at APR 22.7 for borrowing cash on the card.*

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Kinnock joins Snow Hill bowlers

Neil Kinnock, European commissioner for transport, yesterday abandoned the traditional cap of the Welsh valleys for a City bowler to mark officially the completion of the £500,000 refurbishment of Birmingham's Snow Hill station.

The improvement scheme received a £145,000 grant from the European regional development fund.

The centrepiece of the refurbished concourse is a six-foot statue of the archetypal commuter. The piece, cast in aluminium, was designed and sculpted by Worcester-based John McKenna.

At an earlier breakfast with 130 businessmen at the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the former Labour leader called for a partnership between central and local government with the private sector to help resolve transport difficulties and avoid the errors of the past.

"I see little possibility of getting a Trans-European Network developed without a partnership between both the public and private sectors," said Mr Kinnock.

"Private investment must be backed by the public sector to mitigate the risks involved."



Top'n'rails... Neil Kinnock (right) unveiling The Commuter, with Ernst & Young executives at Birmingham yesterday

MPs knife the nuclear sell-off



Edited by Mark Milner

MPs on the trade and industry select committee have done investors a favour. By scrutinising the Government's proposals for the sale of the nuclear industry well in advance, they have thrown much-needed light on the financial complexities well before the sale prospectus has been issued. And they have demonstrated conclusively that the nuclear industry is anything but a straightforward utility investment.

The committee's lucid analysis demonstrates an intricate knowledge of nuclear industry economics and the draft report highlights how the cost of meeting the liabilities could wreak havoc with profit forecasts. So large is the problem that the seven advanced gas-cooled reactors — all the assets bar Sizewell B — could be made uneconomic.

As for Sizewell, the logic behind the MPE's conclusions suggests that Britain's newest atomic reactor should be excluded from the sale altogether because investors will be so uneasy about the paucity of its operating experience.

The problem is not that the liabilities stretch over many years. If it were that simple, City investors could price the company accordingly and reckon to take a short-term view.

The problem is rather that the special fund being set up by the Government will not cover all the liabilities: about £1.4 billion of them will be left out of this arrangement. Who will pay for these?

Also, long-term liabilities may have to be dealt with much earlier than envisaged. If so, the cost escalates dramatically.

The result could be that the industry will have to fork out much larger amounts of cash from an asset base which is in irreversible decline as it nears the end of its operating life. Investors could only stand and watch while more and more cash is put aside at the very time revenue declines — a pincer squeezing the money available for dividends.

As if this were not bad enough, investors must also cope with what they least like: uncertainty. Ministers can give no assurances on the disposal of radioactive waste. There are none to give because there is still no detailed strategy for dealing with the problem. Already Government advisers are warning that the costs of an alternative to the current repository proposed by Nirex "might be viewed by the market as unmanageable".

The emergence of the MPE's draft comes at a crucial point in the Government's campaign to win the hearts, minds and chequebooks of City investors. The Government and the industry are sweating hard to complete the financial restructuring of British Energy through, at times acrimonious, negotiation. And within the next month the industry and its advisers are due to brief analysts.

That campaign faces an uphill struggle, particularly once this report is officially published. Even if Tory MPs manage to water down their recommendations they are unlikely to be able to rewrite the entire

text. As it stands, the draft takes not a sledgehammer — as is usually the case in politics — but a stiletto to the privatisation case.

Pearson pressure

Media predators are now clearly out of the trap — no question of waiting for the legislative starter's flag now the M&L/United News merger is in the open.

Pearson's \$580 million (£380 million) cash bid for the HarperCollins educational publishing business may have deflected some of the heat surrounding the group, but it has surely not eradicated the probability of a takeover.

The self-styled media group — whose interests still span entertainment such as Alton Towers as well as Laszards banking, the Financial Times and Thames TV — remains ripe for acquisition, even though Rupert Murdoch at Granada, who contemplated the move, now has his mind on digesting the Fortis hotels empire.

The market gave Pearson the nod in terms of the price it is paying for HarperCollins. Additional, but doubts must remain that anyone will come off the better when they are buying from Rupert Murdoch. The deal promises to be earnings-positive within a year, but the educational publishing sector remains hard to assess and salvation through new media, such as CD-Rom, is some way off.

By spending so much money Pearson has made itself a marginally more indigestible target.

But, despite recent executive strengthening, the group is still regarded as an organisation of huge potential which somehow fails to capitalise on its strengths.

Pearson is strategically well placed for the new media future. It has a huge intellectual property base, at a time when "content" is all the rage, and it has a decent international spread. It is in harness with another huge brand name, the BBC, in overseas television markets.

But despite the recent rigour of shedding "non-core" operations such as Royal Doulton, the group still lacks that cutting edge.

Against a backdrop of the stock market's love affair with all things media, Lord Blakenham and his managing director, Frank Barlow, may have only a short time to demonstrate they can exploit the strategic advantage point they have created.

Murdoch sells offshoot

Lisa Buckingham

PEARSON, the media and entertainment group which is in the eye of takeover speculation, yesterday agreed to splash out \$390 million (£280 million) to buy the educational publishing operations of Rupert Murdoch's HarperCollins group.

The business, which generates sales of \$315 million a year, will be merged with Pearson's existing Addison Wesley Longman educational publishing division and will rank as one of the four largest

school and college book publishers in the huge US market. Shares in Pearson ended the day 7p adrift at 663p after earlier plunging 30p as City dealers concluded the purchase would make the group a less easy bid target.

Speculation has suggested that US entertainment group Viacom, and even Granada, still digesting its £3.8 billion Fortis acquisition, were prowling around the company. Sources close to Pearson dismissed both rumours.

Pearson, which also owns the Financial Times, Madame Tussauds as well as Thames TV and a stake in the planned Channel 5, said the acquisition

will double Addison Wesley Longman's existing business. HarperCollins College has annual sales of \$117 million, while Scott Foresman achieved revenues of \$199 million last year. Profits from the two operations totalled \$51 million last year.

The company said yesterday that the acquisition would "substantially improve the competitive position of its entire educational publishing division".

A larger purchase is expected to benefit Pearson's educational publishing operations which have recently performed poorly because of increased competition despite

having invested substantially in the business.

Pearson said that it expects the acquisition to benefit earnings immediately. Costs can be cut from the overlap between its existing business and those operations it is buying, managing director Frank Barlow stated. The group is confident of the potential of its latest acquisition even though Mr Murdoch's News Corporation is not renowned either for selling assets cheaply or for disposing of businesses which have growth potential.

The cash purchase will increase Pearson's debt to equity ratio from 5 per cent to 22 per cent. Mr Barlow said the

acquisition should boost Pearson's move into the CD-Rom market thanks to the increasing clamour for so-called "edu-tainment" as well as the growing discomfit with classroom standards prompting more purchases for use at home.

So far, Pearson's \$460 million purchase of CD-Rom specialist Mindscape in 1994 has not delivered the promised rewards and there is scepticism that the public will move as quickly to new technology as has been envisaged.

The group's acquisition comes as the stock market is engulfed by media sector speculation

by this week's planned merger of United News & Media, owner of the Daily and Sunday Express, and the M&L group which owns Anglia and Meridian TV.

That deal, which pre-empted relaxing of the cross-media ownership rules, is expected to unleash a wave of takeovers.

Pearson, which has trading connections with the BBC as well as an envied programme and intellectual property library through operations such as Grundy, Thames TV and Penguin, is regarded as being strategically well-positioned for the coming media era.

500 building jobs at risk from deal

Tarmac to swap £600m of assets with Wimpey, writes TONY MAY

A NEW round of swinging job cuts in the construction industry was ushered in yesterday when Tarmac and George Wimpey clinched a deal to swap £600 million of assets.

An industry source said the deal, in which Tarmac is acquiring Wimpey's minerals and construction business in exchange for Wimpey taking its UK and US private sector housing business, would cost more than 500 jobs.

The Building Employers Confederation has already warned that 20,000 jobs will be lost this year as the industry shrinks — taking the total number lost since the recession started in 1990 to nearly 300,000.

As both companies warned that their 1995 profits were likely to be substantially below the past year's levels, Wimpey chairman Joe Dwyer expected between 100 and 200 redundancies in a phased programme at the company over the next 18 months.

Tarmac chief executive Neville Stims said the job losses would not be small. He added: "The construction industry is still shrinking and there is overcapacity in the market. We haven't decided on specific job losses yet."

Some 4,000 jobs will pass to Tarmac following completion of the asset swap when Tarmac expects to have around 24,000 employees. Wimpey's total workforce will be about 3,500 after 2,000 former Tarmac

staff find themselves on its payroll.

The deal, first announced in November, will make Tarmac the UK's leading construction company, while Wimpey will emerge as the UK market leader in housing.

Mr Stims expects to extract cost savings of £16 million or £20 million in the first year while, at Wimpey, Mr Dwyer said he anticipates savings of £8 million in 1996.

Tarmac expects its 1995 pretax profit to be at least £85 million after charging an exceptional £30 million

"The construction industry is still shrinking and there is overcapacity in the market"

but before charging exceptional non-recurring items. Last year Tarmac made a profit before tax of £107.2 million and an operating profit of £139.3 million but its housing and construction activities had a difficult 1995 with profits hit by lower volumes and growing margin pressures.

Tarmac will have the largest share of the UK minerals market, with about 25 per cent.

Wimpey, meanwhile, forecast a 1995 pre-tax profit of not less than £15.5 million, compared with £45.1 million a year earlier and blamed its downturn on a difficult last quarter for UK housing and a sluggish performance in the US. The predicted drop includes a £3.5 million charge for reorganising its construction unit.

Discontent grows as strike hits Royal Bank of Scotland

Pauline Springett

THE Royal Bank of Scotland was yesterday hit by strike action at its London branches. About 150 staff staged one-day stoppage in protest at the bank's refusal to increase the London allowance, which has been frozen at £3,450 for five years.

The strike was the latest evidence of growing tension in the banking sector. There have been 110,000 redundancies in the past four years. The threat of more job cuts prompted a ballot to strike against compulsory redundancies by 25,000 BIFU union members at Midland, who started voting yesterday. In addition, many banks are at loggerheads with staff over pay. Relations will sour further when the banks shortly announce 1996 profits.

BIFU said yesterday that the strike had mainly affected the

Royal Bank of Scotland's processing office in the City where nearly half of the 100 staff joined in. BIFU spokesman Jerry Pickford said staff wanted the London allowance increased by 16 per cent to £4,000. Costs in London have risen well above the inflation rate in the past five years.

Travel costs had jumped by 50 per cent.

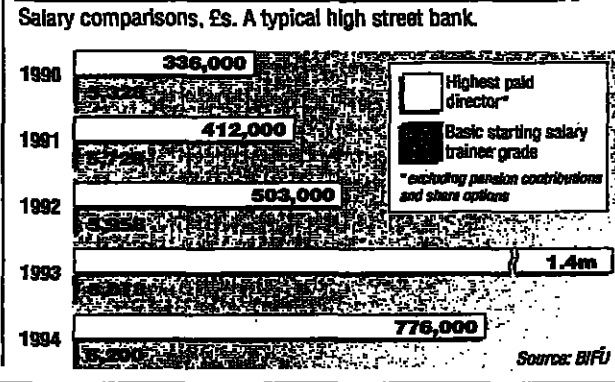
A RBS spokesman said the strike had involved very few of its 4000 London staff. He stressed that all of the bank's 46 branches in the capital had remained open. "There does not seem to be widespread support for this action," he

said. He said London allowances had been introduced to compensate staff for higher costs of living in the south east compared to the rest of the country. But the gap was now "much less than it was."

Midland is planning to cut more than 3,300 jobs this year, many compulsorily, said BIFU. "Midland is expected soon to report profits of £1 billion. What they are doing defies belief," said John Bravery, the union's assistant secretary. A Midland spokesman said the bank was only losing around 400 jobs on a net basis, because it was expanding in some areas while closing down others.

Meanwhile staff at Yorkshire Bank are also to start their second week of an indefinite overtime ban over pay. Some staff in the bank's 270 branches have been refusing to work late nights on Thursdays and Fridays. The union said the action could escalate into a strike.

Banking salaries



TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1.97	France 7.52	Italy 2.360	Singapore 2.12
Austria 15.30	Germany 2.2000	Malta 0.5450	South Africa 5.42
Belgium 45.00	Greece 370.00	Netherlands 2.4750	Spain 165.00
Canada 2.05	Hong Kong 11.85	New Zealand 2.23	Sweden 10.50
Cyprus 0.7075	India 57.06	Norway 5.84	Switzerland 1.750
Denmark 5.53	Ireland 0.9575	Portugal 229.00	Turkey 53.818
Finland 7.01	Israel 4.80	Saudi Arabia 5.68	USA 1.5000

Source: Bank of England

£4.4bn bill as Japan moves to close loan companies

Kevin Rafferty in Tokyo

PRIME minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's cabinet yesterday submitted a bill to parliament to clean up the messiest part of the hundreds of billions of pounds in bad loans crippling Japan's financial system and handicapping its economy.

On the same day, the Economic Planning Agency (EPA) discovered with a note of triumph and relief "a moderate economic recovery".

The bill to close seven bankrupt *jusen* (housing loan companies) is promised a hard battle in parliament, not least because it involves £4.4 billion of taxpayers' money immediately and possibly up to double that figure when tax write-offs and other sums are included.

The government has a comfortable majority in parliament, but will have to face a growing groundswell of popular feeling against using public money, especially with revelations that some of the funds may end up in the pockets of gangsters behind companies that got loans from the *jusen*.

To win over this hostile

public, the bill includes promises to set up a special task force, composed of police and officials from the justice and finance ministries and tax agency, to recover as much of the bad loans as possible.

"We will try to recover as many loans as possible and clarify who is responsible for the housing lenders' bad loans," promised finance minister Wataru Kubo yesterday.

Another bill will probably be presented to stop gangsters blocking the recovery of loans. This will give the government the power to take possession of buildings used as collateral, in some of which gangsters have their offices.

Disposing of the *jusen* is the difficult first step in clearing up a mountain of bad debts officially estimated at 37,500 billion yen (£240 billion), but which may amount to up to double that sum.

The bad loans have delayed Japan's recovery from four years of slump. Shusei Tanaka, the EPA minister said yesterday: "Although the economy has again started to recover gradually, this does not necessarily mean that it has immediately got onto a full recovery track."

Watchdog spells out Welsh Water takeover safeguards

Nicholas Barnister Technology Editor

JANBYATT, the water industry regulator, yesterday published detailed plans to ringfence the finances of Welsh Water's core business following the group's £872 million takeover of Swalec, the regional electricity company.

The regulator and consumer groups feared that it would be impossible to untangle the finances of the regulated electricity and water businesses once common operations such as billing had been hived off to a new facilities management company within the enlarged group.

However, Mr Byatt has got the Welsh Water directors to agree to conditions aimed at preventing the facilities management business from syphoning money out of Dwr Cymru, the core water business, by overcharging.

Dwr Cymru will be forbidden to pay the facilities management company more than the market rate for work done on its behalf.

The company will have to carry out market testing, according to guidelines laid down by Mr Byatt, to discover the correct market price. Failing that, he will set the price to be paid, taking into account costs and a reasonable return.

Welsh Water announced last month that it had agreed to seek a listing for preference shares of the water company by the end of the century, instead of a full listing as originally sought by Mr Byatt.

The regulator said yesterday that Welsh Water had agreed not to transfer any assets of the regulated business to the facilities management company without his approval, and that it would appoint non-executive directors to strengthen the Dwr Cymru board.

Mr Byatt said: "There is concern — from customers as well as regulators — about the possibility of cross-subsidy when the water business becomes part of a larger enterprise. My objective is to ensure that the business operates in the interests of customers."

News in brief

SFA lawyers to rule on Barings

The Securities and Futures Authority said yesterday it would soon decide whether or not to take disciplinary action against some of the former employees of the collapsed merchant bank Barings.

The SFA, which regulates City brokers, said its lawyers had finished studying its report into the affair.

"They will be making a decision concerning potential disciplinary action," said a spokesman, although he declined to indicate when this might be.

The SFA is believed to have investigated the actions of 12 former Barings employees. The report took a year to complete and was finished last month.

Savings record

Sales at National Savings, the state-controlled savings institution, last month reached a record £1.51 billion. After repayments to savers it banked £891 million new money, the highest monthly amount since March 1994. The highest net contributions were from Pensioners Bond at £285 million and premium

Pubs takeover

Pub operator and owner United Breweries is buying Marr Holdings, which owns and operates 134 pubs, for £19.75 million. United also announced plans for a placing and open offer at 50p a share to raise £9.95 million, a proposed 1-to-40 share consolidation, and a decision to change its name to Inn Business Group.

United Breweries shares are listed at 1/4p each following their suspension in January when United announced it was in talks which could lead to a "reverse takeover".

United described the Marr deal as a reverse takeover in the sense that its business was as big, if not bigger, than United's.

Disney lands deal

Capital Cities/ABC Inc said yesterday that it completed its merger with Walt Disney and is now a wholly-owned subsidiary of the world's second biggest entertainment group.



Brussels thinks the unthinkable for Common Agriculture Policy as governments break out the beer and sandwiches to meet trade unions

Jobs: gnawing dilemma for Europe

THIS week unemployment in Germany topped four million, while in France it is already more than three million. As dole queues lengthen across the European Union, the search is on for ways of creating jobs.

European Commission president Jacques Santer is calling a crisis summit of governments, employers and trade unions in May to agree action. The choice of Lille in northern France to host the Group of Seven leading industrialised countries' forum on unemployment in April looks particularly apposite.

In Brussels there is a growing perception that the success or failure in bringing down unemployment over the next two years could help decide whether monetary union starts in 1999.

The Commission is now considering the unthinkable — switching its budget priorities from agriculture to employment-sensitive programmes such as the trans-European infrastructure networks and industrial research. Last year EU farm spending came in under budget by around £1.8 billion, an underspend expected to grow over the next three years.

The trouble is that money cannot be easily switched between different EU budget spending lines without the approval of national governments. Traditionally, member states insist that spare cash is handed back to them. This time even UK Treasury ministers may find it hard to resist the switching of EU funds to fight unemployment.

In Germany, the government is encouraging tripartite efforts to tackle dole queues.

In Belgium, talks involving government, employers and unions will be held this week. Hard bargaining may be needed. Germany's plan to trade wage restraint for job creation put forward by Klaus Zwickel, head of the IG Metall union, came under fire from some government economic advisers. Swedish employers are on collision course with the government over plans to restrict overtime. In France workers took to the streets to protest at welfare cuts.

Germany's labour market problems are increasingly acute, with the social costs of employment rising. The government's annual economic report complained that wage-earners were lucky to take home half their gross pay. It said: "Production costs are now estimated to be so high that economic activity is seen

as pointless. Overheads are becoming more important than direct wage costs and long term have risen clearly faster than direct labour wages. Reunification has also caused a substantial rise in the burden of deductions." Social costs, on average, amount to 41 per cent of gross pay, borne 50-50 between employer and employee. Of that, 15.2 per cent goes on pensions, 12.5 per cent on health insurance, 6.5 per cent for unemployment benefit and 1.7 per cent (later this year) on care of the elderly.

An average industrial worker earns DM4,700 a month (£2,136), with the em-

ployer shelling out another 20 per cent of that on social costs. For most there are another two months pay, presented as summer holiday and Christmas bonuses. More and more German employers talk of switching jobs abroad.

In Sweden, the government is considering restrictions on overtime to force companies to take on staff. The proposals, which would halve the amount of overtime in private industry, come amid growing calls from trade unions and opposition parties for a shorter working week in a drive to promote job-sharing.

The moves reflect growing desperation at the Social Dem-

ocratic government's failure to make inroads into dole queues via the traditional route of state-funded training schemes and financial incentives to employers.

Despite an export boom that has brought soaring profits for many leading corporations, unemployment is close to 13 per cent and rising.

The prospect of capped overtime has created a backlash among companies, with telecommunications group Ericsson, one of the country's biggest employers, threatening to move production abroad if the proposals go ahead.

"We need more flexibility in the workplace, not less," said Göran Whitlock, Ericsson's head of industrial relations. "We cannot simply take an unemployed person off the street and get them to work 20 hours a week. They need train-

ing and that costs money."

In France, efforts at a joint approach are already under pressure. The right-wing government has accused employers of pocketing job-creation incentives without taking on new staff.

President Jacques Chirac alienated employers by blaming them for the 11.7 per cent unemployment rate. But the National Council of French Employers claims prime minister Alain Juppé is not doing enough to make it cheaper to employ people.

A French worker earning the statutory minimum monthly salary of Fr6,350 (€933) costs his or her employer Fr8,700 (£1,180). A spokesman for the national council said: "We are looking at an average of 50 per cent in peripheral charges, paid by the employer. The real problem is not, as is often stated,

the high cost of the French welfare system. What cripples employers are local taxes and contributions to family grants which we do not think should be the responsibility of employers."

The national council points out that peripheral charges imposed on companies represent 17 per cent of gross industrial product. The figure for France's main trading partner, Germany, is 11 per cent, with Britain on 10 per cent and the US on 9 per cent.

The result is that French payrolls contain enough words for a short novel. They are said to be so unmanageable that if the whole country was given a rise at the same time, the computer burden on the power supply would dim the lights. That would at least bring them in line with the prospects of too many in Europe.

Report: GREG McIVOR, JOHN PALMER, ALEX DUVAL SMITH and IAN TRAYNOR

Italy's solar energy sector hopes clouds will clear

JOHN GLOVER at Italy's showpiece photoelectric power station

NOT far from the power station at Serre, near Naples, the air is fresh and otters frolic in a wildlife park. But this is not your usual power station. It looks like rows of greenhouses. There is no noise and no smoke. There are no trainloads of coal, oil tankers, cooling towers or tricky radioactive waste... only a small office complex and rows of something that looks like glass.

That is the upside. The downside is that there is not much power, either. Serre is the world's largest photoelectric power station. But it produces only a puny 3 megawatts of electricity from its 7-hectare expanse of 3 million silicon cells.

The station's owner, Enel, Italy's national electricity utility, says it supplies power to 2,000 households. Photoelectric power powers calculators and airport runway lights. At the other end of the scale, it powers satellites. "The problem, acknowledges Roberto Vigotti, the engineer who runs Serre, comes in the middle: producing power for a grid-connected system — the only non-competitive part of the market.

The problem is the cost of the silicon cells that turn sunlight into electricity. It is about 2,000 lire (€5) per kilowatt hour at Serre. Mr Vigotti estimates, "A diesel generator costs the same overall. But this way it costs a lot at the beginning," he says. The Serre station's

price tag is 35 billion lire, and it will last 30 years with no maintenance. But Enel's station at Civitavecchia produces electricity at less than 4p per kwh. French nuclear power costs about 1p.

Mr Vigotti is undaunted by the comparisons. "Solar energy has far greater added value. We have to make it become one of the options." He is pinning his hopes on a fall in the price of photovoltaic cells.

Though the raw material, sand, is practically free, turning it into cells costs a packet. But the price is falling. In 1985, a module of cells cost \$8 a watt. By 2010 he expects the price to be \$2-3 a watt.

Italian law requires Enel to supply power to anyone, anywhere, at the same price. It occasionally uses solar power to meet this obligation for isolated dwellings. But at not far short of £20,000 a plant, this does not have a mass-market future.

Mr Vigotti's vision is different. Solar panels are tough and do not need to be kept clean. If their price fell a bit, they could be used as roofing material, he suggests. Houses would have two electricity meters, one measuring power consumed from the grid, mostly in the evenings, the other measuring power generated for the grid during the day, when it is most needed. Householders would pay — or pocket — the difference.

Experiments have been tried in the US. But a utility that was working on solar power research with Enel pulled out when it was privatised.

Now Enel is up for privatisation. It remains to be seen what happens to its solar power research.

Update

Italian connoisseurs of eels and pickled gherkins can now eat their fill without worrying that they will be expanding the country's inflation rate as well as their waistlines. Eels and gherkins have been removed from the basket of products whose prices are used to calculate inflation — as have tripe, pencils and typewriters. In for the first time come computers, compact discs and electronic keyboards while, in perhaps the oddest change, jigsaws puzzles have ousted toy trains.

Daimler-Benz will not take any responsibility for repaying DM1.5 billion (£670 million) worth of bonds issued by Fokker should the ailing aircraft company not be able to pay them itself, said Daimler chief financial officer, Manfred Gentz. Daimler, which took a 40 per cent stake in Fokker in 1993, had a contract with the Dutch government that ensured the independence of the aircraft maker, he said.

The Spanish government has voted to allow electricity firms saddled with debts from half-started nuclear power plants to spin these off into a special fund. Iberdrola and

Sevillana, the two firms affected, said this meant they could reduce their indebtedness by 720 billion pesetas (£3.8 billion).

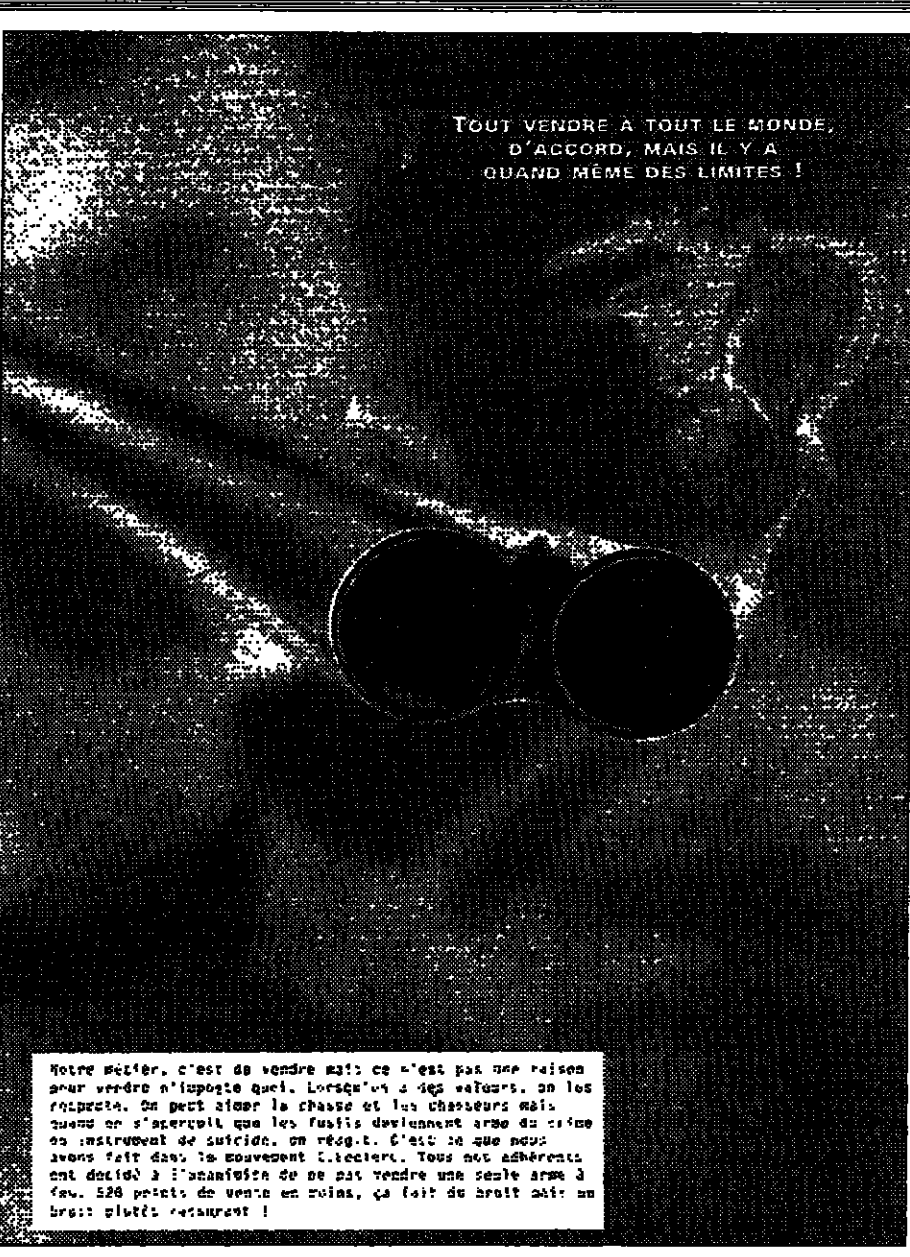
Portugal plans to privatise the airport authority, ANA, this year although the state will retain a majority stake.

Alain Gomez, chief executive of French defence and consumer electronics company Thomson SA, told French senators this week that European defence companies must merge to survive stiff competition from the US. Creating large European defence groups is the "only possible strategy for French industrialists," Mr Gomez told the Senate foreign affairs committee.

The foundation controlling Istituto Bancario San Paolo di Torino SpA, Italy's largest bank, said it plans to sell the public 20 per cent of the company, cutting its holding to 45 per cent to take advantage of tax breaks. At current prices, 20 per cent of San Paolo is worth 1.6 trillion lire (€650 million).

For coining a Euro term

OUR competition to name the coin worth one-hundredth of the Euro, as the single European currency is to be called, attracted a wide range of entries. Most popular was the pun (as in Euro-pan). The Santa, evoking EC president Jacques Santer and indicating a degree of scepticism as to prospects for European monetary union, was close behind. The prize, however, goes to Simon Coates for his Gallic pun in similar vein — the ter. Mr Coates notes: one euro equals cent (100) ters. The David Simononis cartoon is on its way.



Bullet points... Mouvement E Leclerc has stopped selling hunting rifles, at a cost of £13 million revenue a year, and started promoting Mozart and Rimbaud on housing estates

Hypermarket campaign puts conscience first

ALEX DUVAL SMITH reports from Paris on the overtly political message lying behind E Leclerc's novel approach to advertising

NO MORE special offer six-packs. Through a stark new advertising campaign, a hypermarket chain has declared war on the French government's inaction in the face of mounting social ills.

The Mouvement E Leclerc, many of whose 620 outlets are situated near France's bleak suburban housing estates, has launched an advertising campaign around the self-congratulatory theme of changing society.

If an advertising executive's usual response to unemployment and economic hardship is to play up the good times, Mouvement E Leclerc is doing the opposite.

The stars of a series of full-page black-and-white press advertisements for E Leclerc hypermarkets are lonely figures walking through bleak housing estates, a man stacking

trolleys and smoking gun barrels.

The bold message is: "You may think everything has gone to pot. Let us show you what we can do."

This month, E Leclerc became the first of the main hypermarket chains to stop selling hunting rifles and ammunition — a decision which it says means sacrificing Fr100 million (£13 million) revenue a year.

The chain — which, rather like Sainsbury, evolved from a group of family-owned grocer's shops founded in 1947 — is opposed to the liberalisation of Sunday trading. According to one of the adverts,

featuring a man asleep on a sofa, "The Mouvement E Leclerc respects the individual". It also respects profits but, it claims, they must be earned with a clear conscience. Without a hint of irony, E Leclerc is launching "espaces culturels" in its hypermarkets. The advert proclaims: "Who says Mozart and Rimbaud should be banned from housing estates?"

In the week that the French government renewed a ban on superstore development, a spokesman for E Leclerc admitted that the advertising campaign was political.

She said: "We have highlighted issues which are at the

centre of French people's concerns: youth unemployment, the blighted housing estates and crime." They are also the issues for which measures taken by the prime minister, Alain Juppé, have been criticised as superficial.

E Leclerc, which also has outlets in Spain and Portugal, is run along religious lines by Michel-Edouard Leclerc, the son of the group's founder.

Stores are operated by self-employed managers who own their sites and must be sponsored by three other existing E Leclerc managers. Each must sign a charter pledging to draw labour from the local workforce and to share a quar-

ter of pre-tax profits with employees.

The spokeswoman said: "We have always maintained a strong emphasis on social responsibility. Our decision to stop selling arms resulted from a referendum among our managers after police had told us that sawn-off shotguns are often used for violent crime."

French hunters must apply for arms licences. But these are easily obtained at the local town hall.

There are four million registered hunters in France and each has at least one rifle. According to police, 17 per cent of these weapons are bought in hypermarkets.

Spanish siege rewards 'Napoleonic invaders'

ADELA GOOCH in Madrid on the internecine struggle that opened way for foreign takeover

AFTER decades of internecine fighting, one of Spain's most famous family firms, Loewe, fell into French hands this week when Louis Vuitton-Moët Hennessy paid 20,000 million pesetas (£108 million) to raise its stake in the company by 70 per cent to 98 per cent.

The takeover of the luxury leather goods and fashion house is seen by some employees as a "Napoleonic invasion" and coincides with the 150th anniversary of Loewe's creation by two Spaniards, José Silva and Florencio Rivas — although, ironically, the company draws its name from a German, Enrique Loewe Roesbers, who joined Messrs Silva and Rivas in 1872, at first making pistol holders.

Although Loewe has since branched out into clothes, perfumes, scarves, ties and other gift goods, ranging in price from 2,500 pesetas for a key ring to 1.8 million pesetas for a crocodile suitcase, its worldwide fame rests on its sumptuous leather craft.

In Spain, which still accounts for just over half its 20,000 million pesetas turnover, the Loewe name and the high price tags of its goods have made it a bit-player in several scandals involving the rich and famous. One concerned the former finance minister, Miguel Boyer, and his love affair, while in office, with a socialite. Their liaison became public when Mr Boyer slipped into a branch of Loewe to buy her a handbag.

But like its Italian counterpart Gucci, rivalry within the Loewe family led to their losing control of the firm.

The seeds of family discord were planted in the 1950s when Enrique Loewe Knappe, son of the original Loewe, began to expand the company, charging his brother Germain to open a new shop in Barcelona. Loewe's international debut in London brought the two men into conflict and in 1979 Germain sold out to the Rumsas group, which was subsequently taken over by Spain's Socialist government.

But a reprivatization of Loewe in 1984, when it was technically bankrupt, involved the family once more in running the firm and in further conflict, as Enrique Loewe Knappe fell out with his son Enrique Loewe Lynch and founded his own chain of shops. It also brought in a new group of foreign investors, including Vuitton.

Last October, LVMH, with 30 per cent of the stock,

launched a takeover offensive proper. "There was no alternative," said Louis Urvois, Loewe's chief executive since 1984, who added that the firm will benefit from its new stability. LVMH, whose other assets include Christian Dior, Celine, Christian Lacroix and Moët and Chandon, also has an option to buy out the further 6.4 per cent owned by Spanish group, Gabriel Garcia Alonso.

The takeover includes the final stake held by a Loewe — the 0.2 per cent owned by Enrique Loewe Lynch.

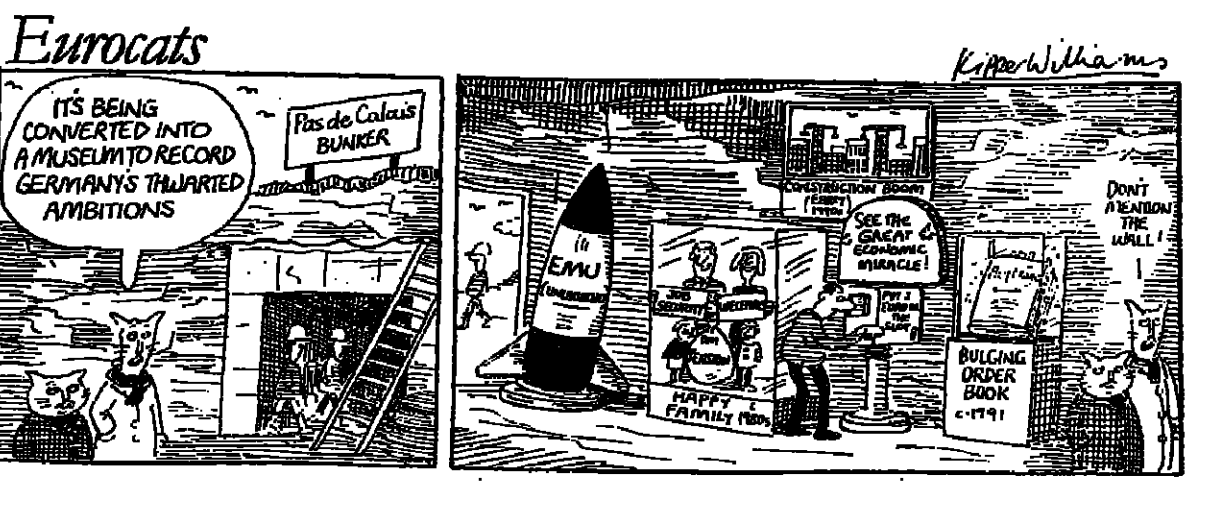
LVMH has taken on a high-yield concern with a turnover of 21,210 million pesetas in 1995 and 650 million pesetas profit — 220 per cent on 1995.

There are 18 Loewe shops throughout Spain and 35 abroad. The company's most important foreign market is Japan, with 80 shops, where

prices are up to four times higher than in Europe.

The new owner guarantees that Loewe will retain its Spanish identity and high standards. A Loewe handbag undergoes as many as 20 quality controls and is almost entirely handmade.

But some of Loewe's 800 employees, who average 15 years' service with the firm, have expressed fears that the company's family feel may disappear.



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Japan's road to recovery, page 22

Tarmac and Wimpey seal deal, page 22

Job dearth threatens Europe, page 23

Finance Guardian

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ALEX BRUMMER in Tel Aviv ventures into Israel's hi-tech world where defence know-how is powering economic revival

Nice work for spooks

THE London Stock Exchange's search for a reliable voice logging system, designed to provide high-quality digital recording, storage and retrieval of all calls conducted by its members, has ended with the decision to sign a contract with Israeli-based NiceLog systems. In opting for NiceLog — a state-of-the-art technology developed by former members of a secret intelligence unit — the Stock Exchange is following several other large players in the City, including ABN Amro, Deutsche Bank and UBS, all of which have recently switched to Nice technology.

Kong's new Chek Lap Kok Airport. A similar system has just been ordered by the American Federal Aviation Administration, for dozens of US airports. Nice is selling an airport-based "black box" on which every message and signal through an airport control tower is digitally recorded and logged, and can be retrieved instantly, even if the message to be analysed was transmitted months before.

The voice logger, next to be installed at direct selling insurance organisations including the UK's Bupa, is simply the latest brainchild of David Arzi and Benny Levin, the mid-40s chairman and president of Nice systems, who have brought to the commercial world the same drive and mission that they once deployed in Israeli signals intelligence, the equivalent of GCHQ. After working for Nasdaq 10 years in Israeli intelligence, Messrs Arzi, Levin and a team of five others from the same unit decided that they worked so well together that they had something worth preserving in the private sector.

With the financial backing of the Discount Investment Corporation, which works with local and overseas partners in backing Israeli-based enterprises, Nice was sufficiently successful by October 1994 to be in a position to sell off its most developed subsidiary NiceCom, a computer software outfit, to the US group 3Com for some \$60 million, making all the original partners very wealthy.

Instead of retreating to the good life, Nice formed an alliance with the US group TRW and pressed ahead with its data communications and logging technology to the point that the rest of the company was valued at \$72.5 million when it floated on New York's Nasdaq market last month. The Nice story, that of a company whose founders have made two fortunes in as many years by harnessing the hi-tech know-how of Israel's defence forces and science-orientated universities, is by no means a freak. There already are some 70 technology-led Israeli-based firms — including such global leaders as Scitex which revolutionised pre-press printing worldwide — quoted on the New York markets, where their market capitalisation exceeds \$2 billion. A further \$1.5 billion of hi-tech firms are listed in Tel Aviv, with a combined market value of around \$3 billion. A third wave of hi-tech enterprises, looking for fresh sources of finance at a lower cost than Nasdaq in New York, is soon expected to hit London's AIM market.

It is no coincidence that the first overseas outfit to raise funds on AIM was the Herzliya-based Dmatok whose highly intelligent, athletic bosses reached the elite rank of major during seven years of flying with the Israeli air force — keeping their squadron together when leaving uniform. Dmatok's print-scanning technology, is currently under market test at Crown Wallpapers near Manchester. Now a high level team from the City of London is heading to Israel next Monday in a promotional conference designed to sell its financial services, including AIM, to Israeli business.

However, it is not just Israeli boutique companies, impressive as their innovation

has been in advancing the Jewish state's hi-technology agenda, which are finding Israel and its talented science and technology literate workforce so seductive. Much of the design and architecture of Intel's 486 and Pentium chips was carried out not in Silicon Valley, but at Intel's Haifa research and development laboratories, where it employs some 450 world-class engineers.

Intel already manufactures some 50 different kinds of specialist processors, using advanced "sub-micron" technology at the Har Hotzaim business park in the hills of Jerusalem. It will soon be breaking ground on a \$1.6 billion silicon chip fabricating plant at Kiryat Gat in the Negev desert, creating at least 1,500 new jobs, many highly skilled. Similarly, Motorola, the world leader in cellular phone technology, designs its chips in Israel while Digital Equipment has its design workshop for computer networking chips in Jerusalem under the command of Avraham Menachem, an army-trained engineer lured away from National Semiconductor after working for Intel in Haifa.

The factors which have transformed the Israeli economy into a hi-tech workshop for the world excite great debate in Israel where the new technology-based industries accounted for up to 60 per cent of 1994 exports at \$15.9 billion. The origins almost certainly lie in the Six Day war of 1967 when the victorious Israeli government became increasingly concerned about its defence supplies, in the face of

international condemnation of its occupation of new territories. The focus of research and development was in two areas, avionics and electronics on one side and smart electronics, radar and communications on the other. The nation's chief scientist Shuki Glatman argues that some 80 per cent of Israel's technological companies came from the decision to explore electronics and communications.

Although the "old boys" network of mission-driven technology teams played its part, it was the civilian fallout from the advanced technical training that gave Israel its edge. The work on field communications, for instance, provided a "very young, very dynamic and good technical base" for innovation.

The technical expertise has been backed over the years by providing access to finance for the young technologists and scientists emerging from the military and academia, including the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Technion in Haifa. Among the more innovative ideas is the Bird Foundation. A joint Israel-US foundation operating since 1979 in which companies from the two countries have pooled research efforts to produce \$4.5 billion in direct and indirect sales. One of Bird's initiators is Dr Ed Mlavsky — a British-born chemist who was responsible for growing the first silicon crystals while working at GEC in the 1950s and in 1983 became president of the Gemini capital fund, one of more than 30 venture capital companies which are backing Israeli technology companies. In the two or so years that

now is can its sustain the level of hi-technology innovation and change which has become the main driver for its 1990s economic renaissance. As a result of the focus on markets abroad, the peace process in the region has brought it new opportunities in the Far East and elsewhere.

"The Japanese went through the psychological barrier in the last two to three years," says Arzi Levin of ARX Israel, an investor in the passive components of micro-chips, which is now part of the Japanese Kyocera group. "We are now seeing Japan rushing in with joint ventures and start-up developments here in Israel," he says. Before Tokyo would not touch Israel with a barge pole.

However, despite improved access to foreign markets there are concerns about rising wages — an engineer in Tel Aviv is no longer much cheaper than one in California. This may erode Israel's competitiveness. There is also no guarantee that the brain rush, which has brought so many talented scientists to Israel from the former Soviet Union will continue. As a result, the government has decided to keep its edge by investing in research and development through the chief scientist's office and education.

At a time when spending cuts are the norm in most countries, Israel has increased education budgets by 70 per cent over the last two years, from kindergarten to university. "We are now number one in the world for our scientists and engineers," says finance minister Avraham Shochat. "It is a good position to preserve."

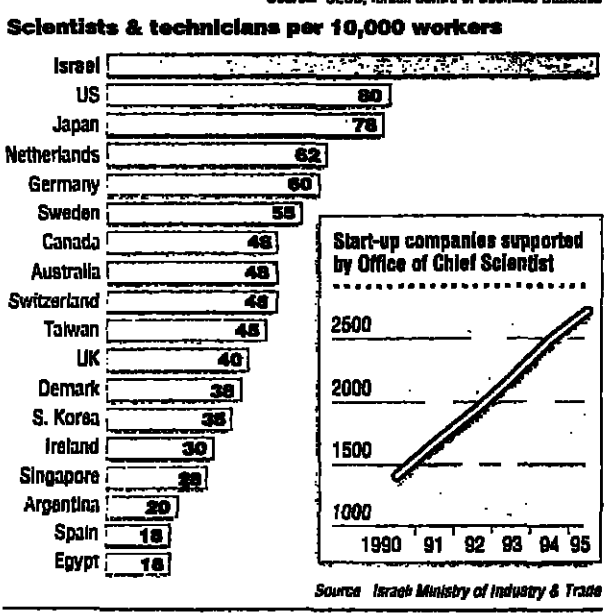
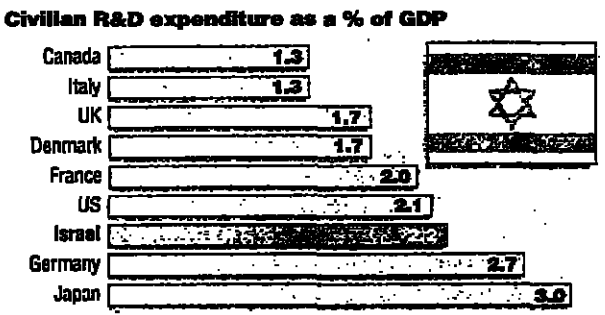
Three ways to success for the budding entrepreneur

THE office of the chief scientist, armed with an annual budget that this year reaches \$380 million (£253 million), dispenses cash to scientists and engineers with the most promising technologies. Office chief Shuki Glatman was last year responsible for 2,400 programmes in 800 companies. There are three types of funding: Grants: This is the main form of assistance. Every year 200-250 new players are granted up to \$150,000 to invest in research and development. The grants aim to create the right atmosphere by reducing the risk to the start-up enterprise. The recipient must account for every shekel borrowed, but is only required to repay the money through a royalty if the R&D turns out to be a winner. The government receives no equity in the project. Incubators: This scheme was designed to harness the scientific and engineering skills of the most talented among the 700,000 immigrants from the former Soviet Union who have poured into Israel since the end of the Cold War. The idea was to create a support system for scientists with great ideas but no practical experience. One incubator Nanomotion, sponsored by the Technion in Haifa, landed a \$3 million order from the US for developing ultraprecise ceramic linear motors. The incubators are backed for two years and then stand on their own. Of some 235 start-ups, more than 180 have graduated from the programme. Magnet: This programme tries to reinforce Israel's lead in some newly emerging technologies. The chief scientist acts as a facilitator bringing together established hi-tech firms for further joint research and development in promising areas. The rules require all those first involved to engage in a free flow of information and not to keep developments for proprietary use. If this rule is met, the chief scientist will defray 88 per cent of expenses.

Gemini has been operating, Dr Mlavsky has picked winners from some 300 projects, always asking the same question: "Is there an exit strategy?" In the case of one venture, Ornat, a maker of switches that organise traffic through computer networks, Gemini's \$1.4 million was turned into \$30 million overnight for Gemini, the owners and other backers when the firm was bought out by Siemens. In Dr Mlavsky's view, a

string of factors combine to give firms like Ornat a chance. Paramount in his view has been "Israel's traditional respect for education and necessity". In a country of five million people "you have to extemporise". This ability to drive projects comes, in his view, from the army and has been supported by the influx of new scientists and engineers through the Russian immigration. The big question for Israel

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It just isn't done...

Simon Beavis

WHORVER coined the phrase "A halo only has to fall nine inches to become a nose" deserves 10 out of 10 for wit, but rather less for wisdom. The truth is, in the corporate world as well as in politics, the short journey from crown to nose often takes a long time and sometimes never happens. These days, after all the fine words about corporate governance and acceptable standards for boardroom pay, we are supposed to be in an era of openness where we only reward success and punish failure. But reputation is a funny thing. It is adhesive and often proves impervious to the facts. A good reputation sticks just like a bad one and a lack of openness — endemic in British society — helps make this the rule. Smart operators know this only too well. That is how they plan their survival. The more leaden-footed have to live with it. If they are Cedric Brown (salary £47,000, pension £247,000 a year, consultancy fees £130,000) they at least live comfortably. Mr Brown's almost as well-paid, part-time colleague on the British Gas board has had a much smoother ride. Richard Giordano, the non-executive's non-executive, hero of a thousand fulsome profiles and recipient of 2450,000 a year from British Gas, inherited a can of worms and could not have moved faster to sort out the mess, the sympathetic still argue. Perhaps that is a fair judgment, although it is clear some think that if Mr Giordano had spent less time designing fancy remuneration packages for directors and more on getting executives to sort out the company's customer relations crisis it would have helped. The point is that if people are asking what has the still widely admired former Wall Street lawyer been doing since he went to British Gas, they aren't asking very loudly. He too will stand down soon. But it is a pretty sure thing that he will not be hounded out like Mr Brown. The corporate world is full of people whose reputation still goes before them when it should be striking a more modest pose. Some survive while others take the rap. Sir Geoffrey Mulocky at Kingsfisher could have fallen on his sword when profits collapsed but continues to run the show. Other executives went instead. Some briefly fall then rise again. Take Bob Horton who was ousted from BP when the company nearly collapsed under the weight of huge debts, went quiet for a while, popped up again running Ralston. Who knows, Lord Young, recently given the chop at Cable & Wireless, could soon be back on his feet. Does this matter? When we're talking about some of the biggest companies in the economy it does. But there is a particularly British code of conduct which inflicts corporate practice, a code of secrecy bolstered by pay-off deals. Failed executives tend to be coddled out not fired. Shareholders, customers and staff have a right to know more but questions invariably go unanswered. It just isn't done, old chap. But if it were, bad managers would not find it so easy to return. Overall, managers might perform better and with scrutiny like that, there would be no chance of rewarding failure.

Quick Crossword No. 8045

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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10			11			
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17						19
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Across
1 Confirmed in one's opinions (4,2,3,4)
8 Imposing building (7)
9 Idiomatic language — of abuse? (5)
10 KIn (4)
11 Production — of Haydn's oratorio? (8)
13 Stretch out (8)
14 Afternoon sleep (6)
17 Twisting (8)
19 Scope — for drama (4)
21 Mature (5)
23 Flourish of trumpets (7)
24 Off target (4,2,3,4)

Down
1 Expiry (3)
2 Manifest (7)
3 Rainbow — flower — part of the eye (4)
4 Supposition (6)
5 Rapturous (8)
6 Giraffe-like animal (5)
7 Fabled (3)

10 Defeat — from piece of bad fielding? (8)
12 Insatiation (8)
15 Small dried grape — found in the harum? (7)
16 Light refreshments — batter (5)
18 Swift (5)
20 Formerly (4)
23 Moose (3)

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